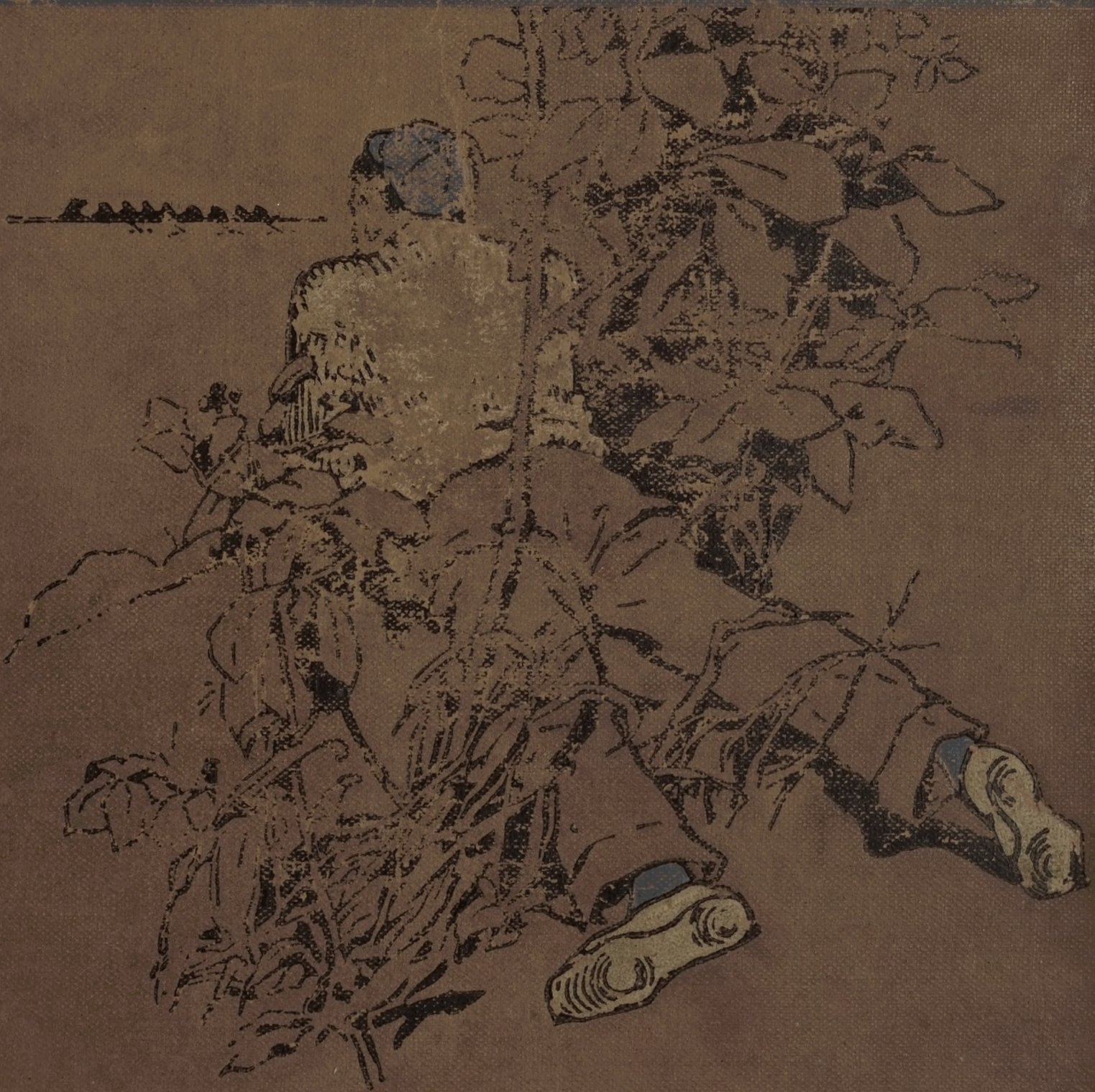


Sons of Eli

RALPH D. PAINE









SONS OF ELI

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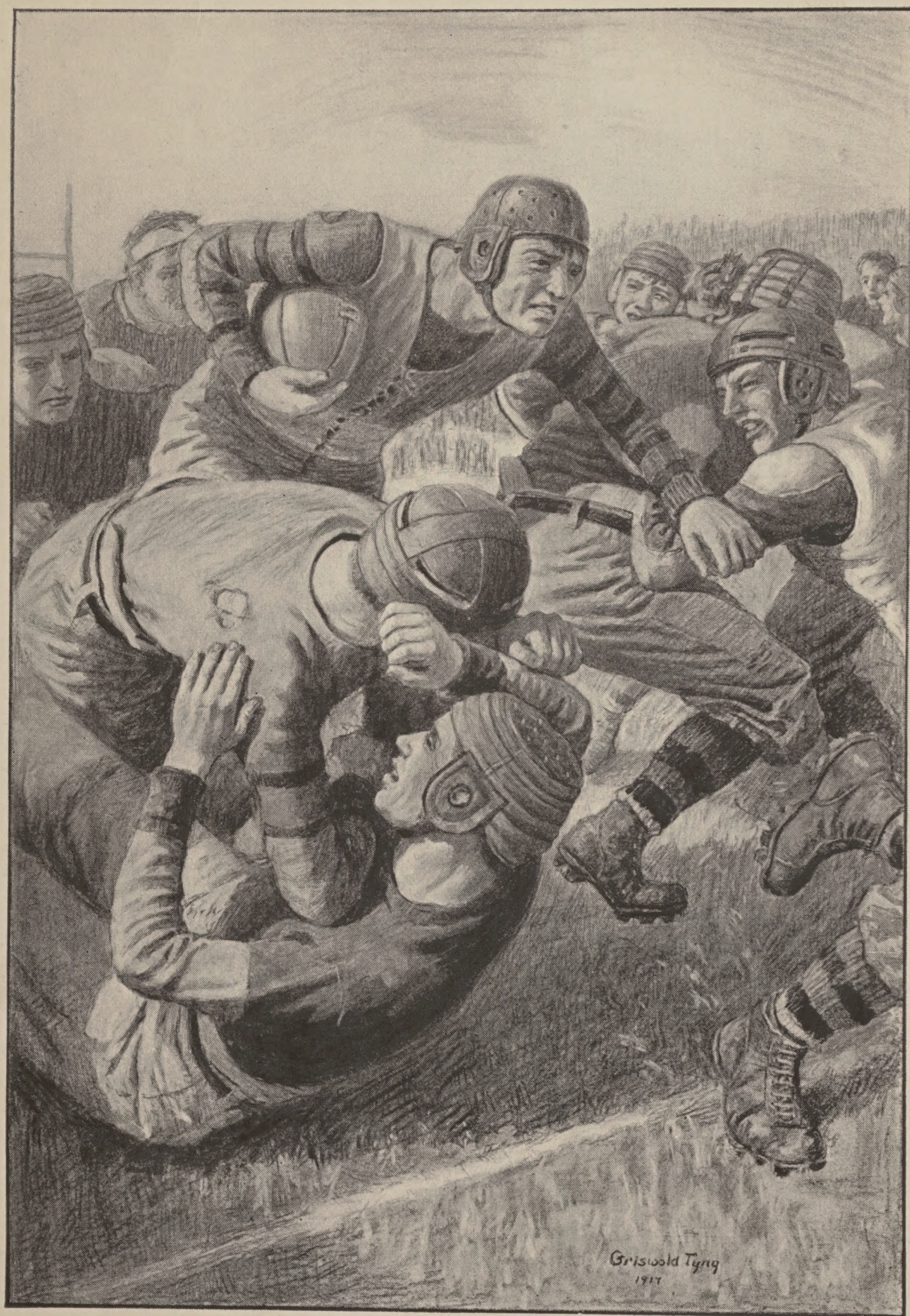
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Twice, thrice, with no intervals for signals . . . they slammed through and over poor Bob.

SONS OF ELI

BY
RALPH D. PAINE

ILLUSTRATED

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A VICTORY UNFORESEEN*

"THAT'S enough for to-night. Turn around and go home. You are a disgrace to Yale, all of you, and you're the worst of a bad lot, Number Five."

The Head Coach roared his convictions through a megaphone from the bow of the panting launch, and the coxswain caught up the words and flung them in piping echoes at the heads of the eight sullen oarsmen facing him. The grind of the slides and the tearing swash of blades abruptly ceased as the slim shell trailed with dying headway to the skitter of the resting oars. Backs burned dull red by the sun of long June days drooped in relaxation that was not all weariness. John Hastings, at Number Five, remembered when to slip along the shore, heading homeward in the twilight after pulling four miles over the New London course, was the keenest joy he had ever known. Now, with the Harvard race less than a week away, the daily toil was a nightmare of ineffective striving. The pulsating shell hesitated between strokes, it rolled without visible cause, and seemed sentiently to realize that the crew was rowing as eight men, not as one.

The boat circled wide and the men swept it listlessly toward the lights of the Quarters at Gales Ferry. They had just undergone the severest ordeal in all athletic training in their race against the stop-watch,

* A story of twenty years ago.

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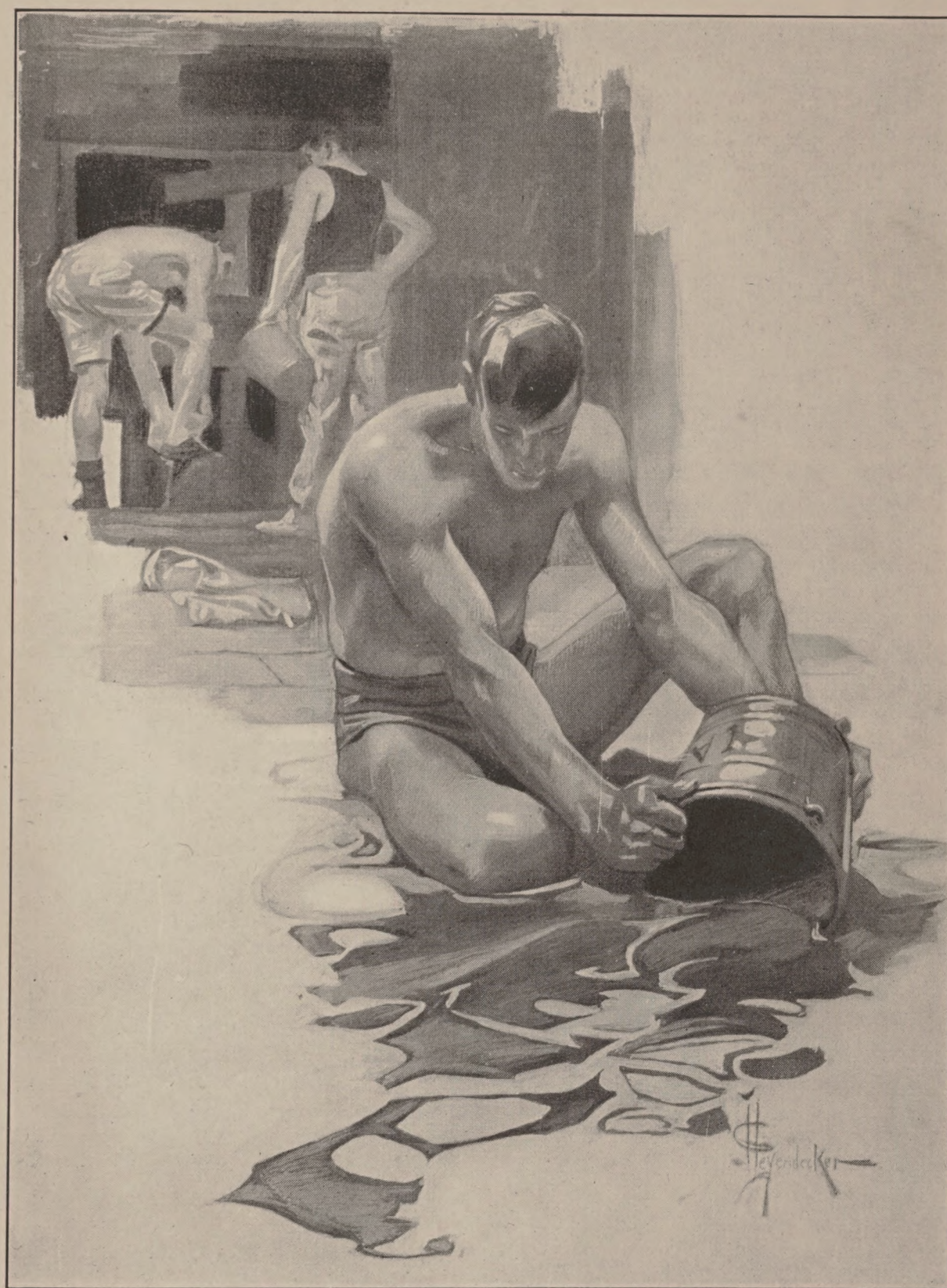
yet if the work had been good they would have finished vibrant as steel springs, spurting in this welcome home-stretch like the sweep of a hawk. Squatted on the boat-house float a little later, dousing pails of water over his sweating shoulders, Hastings heard the Stroke growl to Number Seven:

"What's the matter with you loafers back there?"

"I'm not behind," retorted Seven, with hair-trigger irritability. "The trouble is in the middle of the boat. Hastings is too heavy to row in form this year, and he seems to have gone to pieces in the last month. That's where the worst break in the swing comes. Did you hear the Old Man threaten to take him out of the boat and get him a job as a farm-hand?"

The culprit wearily picked himself up, and dressed in a dark corner of the boat-house, shunning conversation. After the training-table supper, the Head Coach and his younger staff of graduate experts who had flocked back to help stem the adverse tide, summoned the crew into the parlor of the homely old farmhouse. The Nestor of Yale rowing, who for twenty years had taught Yale crews how to win, leaned against the battered piano and looked at the ruddy and wholesome young faces around him. It might have been a council about to weigh matters of life and death, so grave was the troubled aspect of the waiting group, so stern the set of their leader's bulldog jaw.

To-night he had something of their nervous uncertainty, and it showed in the way his strong fingers played with the fringe of the faded piano cover. Pick-



Hastings heard the Stroke growl to Number Seven: "What's the matter with you loafers back there?"

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ing up the well-worn log-book in which was recorded year by year the daily work of Yale crews from January to July, he turned the leaves until a text was found. Then, slamming the book on the piano with a vigor that made the aged wires complain, he said:

“The work has been discouraging ever since you came to New London, but to-day it was so bad that it made me sick. I never saw faster conditions on this course, and yet you clawed your way up-river in twenty-two minutes and ten seconds. That is nearly a quarter of a mile slower than last year’s crew. Do you know what this means? You are strong enough; you have had plenty of coaching, and I intend to work the very souls out of you to-morrow. If there is no improvement—well, you had better jump overboard and drown yourselves after the race than go back to New Haven. No man’s place is safe in this crew, even if the race is only four days off. This means you, Number Five.”

There were no songs around the piano, as was the custom in happier evenings, nor did the Head Coach pound the tinkling yellow keys and lead the chorus of “Jolly Boating Weather,” as he had done so many nights of so many years when the work had been satisfactory. At nine o’clock the captain called out gruffly:

“All out for the walk, fellows.”

The squad filed through the gate into the darkness of the country lane for the end of the day’s routine, with John Hastings trailing in rear of the procession.

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He had become fond of this nightly ramble, feeling on terms of intimacy with every stone wall, low-roofed farmhouse, and fragrant orchard, and courting the smell of the lush June countryside as the rarest of sleeping potions. But to-night he strode with head down, turning over and over in his mind the haunting list of his sins as an oarsman. Always with him of late, they had been driven home anew by the events of recent hours. He looked up at the quiet sea of little stars, and his self-reproach unconsciously changed to the form of a prayer:

“O Lord, help me to get my power on, and to keep my slide under me. I never worked half so hard, but I know I am heavier and slower than I used to be. Help me to stay on the crew. I don’t ask it for my sake, but—but Mother’s coming to the race, and this is my third year on the crew, and she never saw a race, and if I’m kicked off now it will break her heart. It means so much to her, and I am all she has. And—and there’s Cynthia Wells—she’s coming, too. Oh, it means everything to me, everything.”

Such a man was he in the glory of his superbly conditioned strength, such a boy in the narrow limits of his life’s horizon, bounded in this crisis by the Quarters, the boat-house, the crew, and the shining stretch of river!

The next morning sparkled with a cool breeze from the Sound, and its salty tang was a tonic after the sultry days that had tugged at the weights of all the men, except Hastings, until they were almost gaunt.

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When the crew was boated for the forenoon practice, the exhortations of the Head Coach were even hopeful. But after he had sent them on the first stretch at full speed, even the *blasé* old engineer of the launch could see that things were going wrong in the same old way. The emotions of the Head Coach were too large for words and with sinister patience he made them row another spurt. Before he could begin to speak, Hastings knew that there was still a break in the swing at Number Five, and the confirmation came in almost a tone of entreaty from the launch:

"You are still behind, Number Five, while the rest of the crew is swinging better. Try, for Heaven's sake, to get your shoulders on it, and swing them up to the perpendicular as if the devil were after you. Do you want seven other men to pull your hundred and ninety pounds of beef and muscle like so much freight in the boat? I have told you these things a thousand times, and you must hang on to them this time, or I can't risk bothering with you any more. All ready, coxswain, steer for that red barn across the river."

"Forward all. G-e-t ready. R-o-w-w," shrieked the coxswain.

Within the next thirty strokes Hastings felt that he was rowing in no better form than before, although never had he been so grimly determined to row better. Stung to the soul by the taunt of the coach, he threw his splendid shoulders against the twelve-foot sweep, striving always to be a little ahead of Number

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Six, whose instant of catch was signalled by the tell-tale tightening of the crease in the back of his neck. The captain called:

"Give her ten good ones, and look out for the stroke. It's going up."

"O-n-e, T-w-o, Thr-e-e, F-o-u-r, F-i-v-e," gasped the eight, in husky chorus to the cadence of the catch.

"Sl-o-w down on your y-o-u-r slides," yelled the bobbing coxswain. "You're be-h-i-n-d, Number Five."

Hastings could have throttled the coxswain for this. He had heard it so often that it cut him on the raw. The Head Coach picked up the damnable refrain:

"You are behind, Number Five."

Recalling how once, to fill an idle half-hour, he had enumerated sixty-four faults possible in rowing a single stroke, Hastings was sure that in this spurt he was committing all these and several as yet unrecorded. The futility of his flurried effort became maddening. Where was his strength going?

The verdict befell as the launch steamed alongside, and a substitute, perched on the cabin roof, jumped to the deck at the beckoning of the Head Coach, who said, with a ring of sincere regret:

"I am afraid I'll have to try a change at Number Five, to see whether we can patch up that break. Get in there, Matthews. Better get out and take a rest, Hastings."

The cast-off crawled aboard the launch and went aft to the cockpit under the awnings where he could be alone. Holding himself bravely under the sympa-

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thetic eyes of his comrades, he watched the substitute grip the oar, still warm from his own calloused hands. Nor did he yet realize what had befallen him, and felt vague relief that the struggle was done. At dinner he was cheerful and flippant, and the other oarsmen admired his "sand."

The reality began to overtake him when he went to his room under the eaves and anxiously asked the Stroke:

"Well, how did it go with a new Number Five?"

"A little better," replied his roommate, with evident reluctance. "The Old Man says he is going to keep Matthews in your seat for the race. It's a hard thing to talk about, Jack. You know how broken up we all feel about it, don't you? We know you tried your level best, and your extra weight this year made you slow, and you couldn't help that. Heard from your folks lately?"

Hastings was reminded of things he had feared to let rush into the foreground. He had been too pre-occupied to think of looking for mail down-stairs, and was started for the door when the Stroke halted him with:

"Oh, I forgot to tell you I brought up a couple of letters for you. There they are, on the bureau."

Hastings recognized his mother's handwriting on one envelope, that of Cynthia Wells on the other. He appeared to hesitate which of them to open first, and in this hour of trial his choice was swayed by an impulse as old as the world.

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The letter which he preferred was dated on board the yacht *Diana*, off New Haven, and he read slowly to himself:

DEAR OLD JACK:

I am so happy to be almost at the scene of your victories, past and to come. And I think I have never seen you row. How foolish and inconsiderate of father to drag me abroad so early two seasons on end! But I am bringing all the heaped-up enthusiasm of three years—think of that! I suppose you are as calm as *blanc mange*, while I am jabbering rowing at everybody in sight, and am getting really awfully clever about strokes and catches (are they so very catching?). Your class-mate, Dickie Munson, is on board, and has been coaching me up on the technical mysteries, and spinning many jolly yarns about you. I hear you are to be elected captain of next year's crew, the very grandest honor at Yale. May I offer congratulations in advance? I do so want to see you, and will be one of the worshipping admirers of your prowess! Of course you will be busy until after the race, and then you are to come down to the *Diana* as soon as ever you can. Don't forget that I will have an eye on you all the way down the course.

Yours as ever,

CYNTHIA.

Hastings tucked this letter in an inside pocket with reverent care, and without speaking sought next what his mother would say:

MY DEAREST BOY:

I have decided to come North by sea, and will sail on the *Mohican* to-morrow. The fare is considerably less than by rail, and as you have insisted upon paying the expenses of my wonderful trip, I want to save you all I can. The ship is due at New York late in the afternoon of the twenty-seventh, the day before the race, and I plan to take the earliest train to New

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London, to reach there that night, if possible. I have the address of the boarding-house in which you have reserved the nice room for me, and you will not have to worry at all about having me met, as, of course, you will not be able to come down from the Quarters. It will be hard to bear, this being so near you on that last night, unable even to kiss you good night and God bless you. After the race you can come to my room, and we will go to New Haven on the special train with the crew. Of course you are going to win again, when your mother is coming all the way from the South to see her boy fight for old Yale. Oh, I want so much to see my big, handsome boy, and it will be music for me to hear the thousands cheering him. I received the ticket for the observation-train, in car fifteen, and I can find it at the station, as you directed me, so don't have me on your mind for a moment. I pray for you each night, and may God bring me safe to you.

Your loving and adoring

LITTLE MOTHER.

"I don't see how I can let her know," observed Hastings with a long sigh.

"Which?" asked the Stroke, as he searched his comrade's face with shrewd kindness.

"I mean Mother, of course," was the reply, followed by a sharp prick of conscience. "She is coming up by sea, she is on the way now. The other letter was from a—from a friend. She is to be here, too."

"You ought to meet her in New York—your mother, of course. She is first in your thoughts, I am sure," advised the Stroke, with a perceptible shade of disbelief. "Just let her see that you are sound and lusty, that's what she will care most about. She will be sorry for your sake, not for her own."

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Throwing himself across his cot, Hastings looked out of the nearest window, down the river to where the flag above the Harvard Quarters slashed the sky like a ribbon of flame. There were the enemy whom he had helped to defeat, and now it seemed an honorable thing, greatly to be desired, even to row on a beaten crew. The tousled head went to the pillow, and he could no longer help pouring out his heart to his friend:

"Nothing can make it any worse than it is. I have worked every summer so far, and I was going to have a real vacation this year, the first since I have been in college. Now I can't bear to think of any good times, with disgrace hanging over me. I am going to apply for my summer job again, but I've been working in the office of a Yale man, and I am afraid he won't want to have a slob around him who was kicked off the crew four days before the race, will he? Of course he won't. The last month has been simply hell. Mother has been living in the thought of this trip just to see me row against Harvard, and—and, there is a girl—well, I am a big, whining, useless baby, that's all."

The Stroke was an older man by five years, who had known a man's stress and sorrows before his college days began. Had he been a man of readier speech, he would have tried somehow to make the sorrowing boy realize that there were other worlds to conquer, wider and more inspiring fields in the years beyond. Yet there was something quite fine in this

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absorption in the crew; it was what one ought to feel at twenty-one, and it might be better for him to fight it out alone. The Stroke was glad when the youngster marched out of the room without more words. "I hope he stands the gaff," thought the elder man.

Hastings's first impulse had been to flee the place, and he was still busy with the longing to be anywhere away from the sights and sounds that racked him because they were so infinitely much to him. While he struggled with the decision, the eight began to make ready for the long afternoon practice. As the shell swung out of sight around the curve of the shore, Hastings had not believed it possible that any one could feel as lonely and neglected as he at that moment. Just then he saw a University substitute standing idly in the boat-house door, and he remembered that with one transferred to the eight, and another laid off with a cold, this youngster, Bates, was the sole survivor of the trio which had its own thankless duties and burdens. The intending fugitive made a choice then and there, as he slid down the bank, shouting:

"Aren't you going out to-day to keep tabs on the Red-Heads?"

The solitary substitute ruefully shook his head:

"No, I haven't any one to man the pair-oar with me, and I'm no good in a single shell. And I ought to be over at the start right now, for the tip is out that Harvard is going to try the four miles on time, their last attempt. How am I going to catch their time, I want to know, with nobody to help me?"

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Hastings laid hold of the bow of the pair-oared boat as he said:

"Get hold of the other end of the tub, and we'll put her in the water. I might as well be a substitute, too, if there is work for me to do. We'll hold the watch on the Johnny Harvards in great shape."

The substitute glimpsed something of the sacrifice and struggle in Hastings's offer to help him, but he could not know it all, because he was only a "sub." The two were bending over their stretchers lacing the shoes, when the launch slipped past the float so quietly that the substitutes did not hear it. The Head Coach, however, standing on the forward deck, heard Hastings say to his mate with an evident effort:

"I came pretty near playing the baby act and running away, but if I can help the Yale shell to go faster by being out of it, I am glad of it. That's what I am rowing for, anyhow. And if I can be of any use as a substitute, why, that's what I am here for, too. It is all for Yale, isn't it?"

The two in the pair-oar rowed across the river, landed a half-mile above the start of the four-mile course, and walked down the railroad-track.

"We can't do anything more than catch their time over the first mile," observed the experienced Bates; "but that will give us a good line on the gait they are going." Hastings meekly followed instructions to hurry to the hill opposite the first-mile flag, and be ready to wave his handkerchief when the Harvard crew should pass him. Bates, at the start with a

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stop-watch, would snap the time at this signal. In dust and quivering heat, Hastings trudged along the ties, crept up the hill, and lay on his stomach under a tree, waiting the appearance of the Harvard crew. The tears could not be held back at thought of this humiliation, of the abysmal gap between this petty spying in ambush, and all the days in which he had swung by this first-mile flag in the University eight.

There was much time for meditation, and while the first shock had wrecked his every hope, he began to patch the fabric of his dearest dream, until he was ready to believe that, even more clearly than his mother, Cynthia Wells would understand. She would see that he had tried to do his best, that the failure was blackened by nothing left undone, and that his great disappointment was of a piece with those troubles which knit closer the bonds of friendship. She would know that it was "all for Yale," that winning the race was more important than anything else in the world, and he ached for the words of comfort and inspiration she would be so eager to offer. If friendship meant anything it meant help in such times as this.

II

On the day before the race Hastings's occupation as a substitute was gone. The shadow of the morrow was over the Quarters, the atmosphere was funereal, and the strapping oarsmen were coddled like infants.

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He had no part in the excitement and was free to meet his mother in New York that afternoon. The news he must bear her made him as nervous as if he were facing the tussle of the eights. After farewells with his other comrades he sought the Stroke, who grasped the hand of the sorrowful exile in a crushing grip.

"Keep your nerve, Jack," said he; "it will all come out in the wash. I know there's a girl in it, and if she is the right sort, she will understand."

Hastings flushed at mention of the feminine factor, as he stammered:

"Of course she will understand. She is that kind, all right. But I hope to Heaven I'll never clap eyes on Gales Ferry again. Damn the place! Good-by. You've been a brick to me, and lots of comfort."

After he had gone, the Stroke looked up from his book for some time, while a tender smile softened his strong mouth. He had found a girl who could understand, and he hoped the same good fortune for his friend.

When the train passed through New Haven, Hastings wore a hang-dog air, fearing recognition. A runaway from New London the day before the race, his college town was the last place on earth in which he wished to be seen. As he neared New York he braced himself for the meeting with his mother, blindly fearing that she would be sorely disappointed in him. But the *Mohican* had been delayed by heavy weather along the coast and a smothering fog off Sandy Hook,

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and could not be expected to reach her dock before seven o'clock of the following morning.

Hastings felt as if he were cast away on a desert island. He yearned for his mother now, but she was somewhere out in the fog, and he was alone in New York, alone through the long night before the race with all its smarting, thrilling memories. Long after midnight, unable to coax drowsiness, his thoughts went homing back to the Quarters as he knew the place in these last hours.

He could hear the call of the robin at daybreak in the tree by his window, the call that had aroused him to face the issues of two races when he was Number Five. He could picture the morning scenes, the hush of lawn and house, the enforced lounging on bed and sofa until the summons to be ready and dressed at the boat-house.

Then he recalled the tense waiting on the float for the call of the whistle of the referee's yacht, how the year before they had sat together in the sunshine and sung the chorus of "Jolly Boating Weather." Since then it had become to him a battle song, a chant profoundly burdened with sentiment and solemnity. He could not hear it without feeling a lump in his breast. Now the shell would be launched, the men seating themselves with unusual care, and the coaches would shake hands from stroke to bow as the eight shoved off to row over to the start. . . . He wiped the sweat from his face and came back to the stifling room of the hotel in New York and the sense of cruel isolation.

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It was almost daylight when Hastings fell asleep, more tired than he knew, and when he awoke, a glance at his watch told him that he had overslept, and that it was nearly ten o'clock. The reply to a frantic telephone message was that all the passengers of the *Mohican* had gone ashore shortly after eight o'clock. His mother had gone to New London without him, and the express-train into which he dived was due to arrive at the scene of conflict barely in time to connect with the observation-train, if all conditions favored. Ten minutes behind time, he was running through the New London station, as the tail of the rearward observation-cars was vanishing around a curve of the track yard, with cheering in its wake.

Vainly pursuing on foot, Hastings came to a standstill, stranded and alone, unable even to see the race, about to start five miles up the river. Walking down to the nearest wharf, he could see through the arches of the great railroad bridge the festooned yachts stretching in squadrons beyond, and between them only a little patch of silver lane where the crews would finish.

III

Shortly after noon, there stepped from the first "special" into New London a fragile yet sprightly little woman in rustling black, alone but confident and unafraid. Her sweet face was made beautiful, even youthful, by the flush of excitement that tinted

A VICTORY UNFORESEEN

her cheek so delicately beneath her silvered hair. Violets were pinned at her waist; in one hand she carried a flag of Yale blue, and in the other a decorative souvenir programme "containing the pictures of all the crews." Those near her in the car had watched with pleasure her vivacious interest in this booklet, but only the gentleman sitting next her had been taken into her confidence. Thirty years out of college, he was come from the Far West to his class reunion, and he, too, had a boy in Yale. Fortunately or otherwise, he had not kept in touch with the most recent news of the heroic figures of aquatics, and he knew not even the names of the crew of the year at Yale, so that she could enlighten his lamentable ignorance and right willingly. The "souvenir" booklet had been printed a week before the race, too soon to record the change in the *personnel* of the Yale eight, and there was her boy's picture filling a page, a massive young giant, most scantily clothed. The man from the West saw in the picture the mother's brown eyes, and his heart was stirred, for he knew what it was to have an only son with his mother's eyes.

"Yes, John has been on the crew three years," she confided, "and he will be the captain next year. I fairly live with him in spirit through the whole six months of the training season. He has had a very hard time this season, and lately his letters have been a little despondent. But I was never so delighted as when I learned from the head-lines of this morning's newspapers that there has been a wonderful improve-

SONS OF ELI

ment in the last week. Oh, I am excited, there is no use trying to deny it. It is almost too big an event for an old woman to survive."

The gray-haired stranger was comforting, and in the recesses of his memory found certain eulogies pronounced by his son regarding "Jack Hastings, the biggest man in his class, by Jove!" He insisted upon presenting two of his own classmates, and they bowed low in formal tribute to the "mother of the next captain of the crew."

The porter must leave her bag in the station, for she could not wait to go to the boarding-house when the air was full of tingling sights and sounds, all the excitement and flaunting color paying homage to the prowess of John Hastings. She found car fifteen, and sat in a beautiful dream, watching the holiday crowds fill the canopied lengths of open train. What a tale to tell when she should come again to the little colorless village in the South! It seemed impossible to drink it all in when the train began to move and in a few moments the amazing panorama of the Thames flashed into view. The eager eyes of the oarsman's mother passed quickly over the gorgeous marine pictures, by the twisting length of the riotous train, up, up the river toward the quiet reaches, hoping to discern the white house on the high bank and the big blue flag floating above the Quarters at Gales Ferry, a scene she knew from many descriptions.

Soon the train had passed the yachts and the crowds massed on shore, and was opposite the red-roofed

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home of the Harvard crew, whose crimson flag seemed to her to flaunt an insolent defiance. In near-by cars fluttered many Harvard flags, as the partisans from Cambridge chanted their slogan, inspired by the sight of their rowing camp across the river. She turned to look at the offenders with reproof in her manner. How could they be so misguided as to cheer for Harvard? How dreadful it was to think that if Jack should be beaten, every one of them would be shouting even louder for joy. So she turned to gaze at the Yale Quarters, which she could see quite plainly, and the ugly brown boat-house squatted at the water's edge.

Her color came and went, and stayed in a brilliant patch when she saw, with a quick intake of breath, a yellow streak appear in front of the boat-house, and a number of Liliputians walking beside it. There seemed an eternity of delay before the wisp of a shell settled on the water, and nine figures climbed into it, while her heart was tripping it furiously.

The thing became in motion, it was crawling across the river like a mechanical toy, with frequent pauses. Could this be The Crew, this fragile thing that moved over the water so slowly? A roar from the Harvard cars, and Mrs. Hastings turned to see a similar set of manikins swaying in as absurd a boat, heading out from "Red Top." The mother looked at them only for an instant, because the Yale crew was crossing the river faster than she could realize, and soon it was half a mile above the start, paddling and drifting down

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with the tide to get into position at its stake-boat. She wanted to call imploringly to the referee to bring the crew nearer, nearer, so that she might see the men, and count from the bow, to two, three, four, *five*. Presently the shell swung round, parallel with the shore, and manœuvred into position scarcely twenty yards from the observation-train hanging on the edge of the bank.

At last the mother could look for Number Five. She counted with an eager and quivering finger. No, she must have made a mistake—that was not Jack at Number Five. They must have shifted him to another seat at the last moment.

She flung away all method and searched the stern young faces from stroke to bow, from bow to stroke and back again, with yearning agony of intensity. She made bold to ask that the gentleman next her lend her his field-glasses for a moment, and focussed them on the shell, seeking in vain. The color had fled from her cheeks, and she sat back, white and silent, beyond speech. Around her raved the cheers of thousands, but the rocketing “rahs” for Yale sounded in her ears like some barbaric funeral chant. She had become old and weak far beyond her years.

Her distress was unnoticed, and through a haze she saw the long shells leap from their leashes with incredible suddenness in tearing cascades of foam. To the mourning mother the race was no more than an exhibition of automatons, as Harvard took the lead, and then the long Yale swing cut it down remorselessly,

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foot by foot, until the gap was closed. She closed her eyes with a weary sigh, but rallied in a little while to try to make herself heard above the din. Yale was spurting gallantly, and those around her were oblivious to the quavering voice and its vital questions:

"Where is John Hastings? Number Five in the Yale crew? Where has he gone? What have they done with him? Oh, tell me, tell me, tell me, please. I am his mother."

Yale hopes drooped as Harvard met the spurt, and in the lull a young man of a kindly face saw that she was ill, and leaned toward her to ask whether he could help. She was able to make him understand, and there was a huskiness in his voice that came not all from cheering, as he said:

"Why, he's all right, safe and sound as a dollar. He was taken out of the boat four or five days ago, and Matthews put in his place. No, I don't know what the matter was. Too heavy, I fancy. I'm awfully sorry for you."

Where else should a boy flee in time of trouble than straight to his mother's arms? Therefore the reason for his disappearance must be an alarming one. Then she felt a blaze of swift anger. It was an outrageous act of injustice, this deed of the Yale coaches. They were no better than conspirators thus to treat the best oarsman they had. It was not in a mother's philosophy to grasp the view-point that what was best for Yale was best for all who fought for its glory. She vowed that a reckoning was due, and that her duty

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was to see these coaches, and tell them the truth before she left the scene. And so, between wrath and tears, she saw the race end, saw the Yale crew sweep across the finish line, victors over Harvard by four lengths. This was what she had come to see, what she had lived in the hope of seeing through three long years, and now all had turned to ashes.

Wearily she threaded a way through the thronging railroad station, found a cab, and gave the driver directions for reaching the boarding-house where a room awaited her. Her steps faltered as she toiled up the stairs, and all that gave her strength for the ascent was the flicker of hope that Jack might be there, or that some message had come from him. The room was empty, the table bare of letter or telegram. Carefully laying her bonnet and jacket on a chair, she looked at her face in a mirror, and it frightened her. Although she was eager to be out again in search of the way to Gales Ferry, rest was imperative, and she crossed over to the bed and lay down for a few moments until the dizzy faintness should pass.

IV

When John Hastings drifted down to the wharf nearest the railroad station, he laid an almost aimless course. While he could not see the race, he was drawn to the harbor into which flowed the river, the river by whose bank, five miles away, his comrades

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were waiting for the summons, and perhaps even then singing "Jolly Boating Weather," as it was never sung at any other time.

Through the maze of fragile shipping flying the flags of a dozen yacht clubs threaded a naphtha launch hurrying toward the bridge, the cockpit gay with white gowns and blue uniforms, and Yale colors fluttering at bow and stern. The outcast bestowed no more than a scowling glance on the glittering, humming pleasure craft, and was about to saunter shoreward with a vague intent of hovering near the telegraph office until the result of the race should be known, when the beckoning flurry of several handkerchiefs delayed his retreat.

He walked to the end of the wharf in idlest curiosity, and the possibility staggered him only an instant before he knew the fact. There was no mistaking the trim and jaunty figure in the bow for any one else than Cynthia Wells herself, as she flicked the steering-wheel over and ran the craft close to the string-piece, while the sailor in the stern held fast with a boat-hook. Her voice was lifted in peremptory command:

"Scramble right down here this minute, and tumble aboard, Jack. We are awfully late already. Broke down on the way from the *Diana*. I don't know what in the world you are doing here, but we can't pass such an image of desolation. Hurry, please. I am the skipper to-day."

Jack would have vastly preferred to run away. This meeting was not at all what he had planned.

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His misery loved company limited to one, and that one was hedged about by half a dozen laughing men and girls out for a holiday lark. He realized how sorry a figure of a man he was in this scene, but retreat meant cowardly flight, and there was the shadow of consolation in being near her. The grip of "Dickie" Munson's hand spelled understanding of the situation as the classmate said:

"We're tickled to death to kidnap you this way, Jack. It's a tough day for you, I know, but you must not miss the race. Get forward. There's room by Miss Wells, and, of course, she is dying to see you."

When he found himself standing by the side of Cynthia, she was alert and absorbed in steering the launch with confident ease toward the swirling channel between the arches of the bridge, where small craft darted and drifted in common eagerness to find positions along the last mile of the swarming course.

The jolly wind whipped a straying lock of gold-shot hair across her eyes, and she brushed it aside with an impatient gesture. Her adorable face, warm with the glow of many summer days of sun and breeze, was set in serious alertness. Standing straight and tall, head thrown back and shoulders squared, the poise and look of her were as athletic as the bearing of the man at her side. With her mind wholly intent on the business in hand, she said crisply:

"I have the right of way over that tub to port? Why doesn't he head inshore? How is the tide through that middle arch, Jack? You ought to know."

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He made brief reply. Unreasonably sensitive, he did not realize that her preoccupation was essential. At the least, he had expected she would speak some ready word of the sympathy he craved, because he stood for a tragedy in which she ought to show concern. Did she not know, could she not feel what this flight up the course meant to him, "Jack Hastings, Number Five"? But the girl at the wheel was too busy even to note the gloom in his face, as she shot the launch into a roomy berth near the three-and-a-half-mile flag, at the edge of the streak of open water. Then Cynthia turned to Hastings, held out a firm brown hand, and said with a happy smile:

"There, congratulate me. Could your coxswain, with his absurd little megaphone and all his importance, do a neater trick of steering than that? Now, you poor unfortunate boy, I am ready to hear all about your troubles. We heard yesterday, when we came ashore at New London, that you had been evicted, or had gone on strike, or something of the sort. Are you all broken up over it, and how did it happen? I am terribly disappointed, too. I came on to see you win a race. I don't care a rap for the other heroes. Poor old Jack! He looks as if he were chief mourner."

She patted his hand with a motherly air, and the mourner sighed heavily. Evidently she was making a gallant effort to hide her genuine emotion from the alien company. He tried to imitate her lightness of manner as he replied, with a laugh that was a trifle shaky:

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"Yes, I have been out of the crew four days, Cynthia, and it seems four years. It was awfully good of you to pick me up, but I don't know whether I am glad or not. Perhaps you ought to have left me alone."

"And why, Mister Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance? Didn't you want to see me?"

There was archness in the query, even a trace of pretty coquetry in her air. Where was the kinship of souls, that wonderful symphony of understanding he had dreamed of as come true? With a fierce onset of earnestness, he confided:

"I wanted to see you more than any one else in the world. I wanted to see you more than I wanted to see my mother. She is looking for me now. She is on that train up yonder. It has been a pretty hard day for me, and I thought it would be for you."

She tried to make amends:

"Why, of course, it is a dreadful disappointment for you, and for me, and for all your friends, Jack. But aren't you glad it gave you the chance to be here? I certainly am. And I'm trying to make the best of it, and so must you. You are the same old Jack, you know, in the crew or out."

The first smile in days broke over his face. If he was the same old Jack to her, the rest of the world could go hang. He was about to tell her what he ached to reveal in a rush of pent-up desire, what *the crew* stood for, and how much of his life was bound up in it. She caught the kindling light in his face,

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and before he spoke, she thought this light was all for her. That his interest should be absorbed in the crew, rather than in Miss Cynthia Wells, piqued her, even now, as he began:

"I was afraid the crash was coming for some time. Nobody can know how I hoped and worried through those weeks, when I felt that I was slipping back. I did not write you about it, because I could not believe there was any serious danger of my being thrown out at the last moment, and I knew it would harrow you to share this worry with me. I—I—wanted your——"

The classmate behind him jumped to his feet and shouted:

"There they come! Yale! Yale! Yale!"

Hastings glanced along the water level up-river. Two black dots were visible, each fluttering thread-like tentacles. Abreast of them trailed the observation-train, like a huge serpent of gaudy hues. He bit his lip and trembled with sudden excitement, while Cynthia Wells stood, one hand shading her eyes, so eagerly intent that it was plain that she had forgotten the oarsman out of the shell. The sea of blue, rippling along the train, told him that Yale was leading. He shut his eyes, fearing, until it sickened him, that some accident might happen to Yale, even with what seemed to be a safe lead.

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V

To those who did not know, the winners seemed to be playing with rowing as they swept toward the finish. With no apparent effort the blue-tipped blades flashed in and out, without even a feather of spray. Forward and back again rocked eight bare backs, working as if coupled on the same connecting-rod. Hands slipped easily into arched and heaving chests, and shot out with lightning speed; slow, slower, swooped the shoulders squared beneath necks like fluted columns and heads poised with airy grace. As Hastings leaned far out on the bow of the launch, waving his hat in a fury of approval, the shell rushed by him not twenty feet away, and the complaining roar of the slides was music in his ears. He could feel with that agony of effort to keep in form when every muscle cried out in rebellion, and the choking fight for breath, and yet, with it all, the glory of making the swing and catch fairly lift the quivering shell. And he knew, also, the intoxication of the sight of the Harvard crew laboring astern, as seen through eyes half blinded with sweat.

Hastings was lifted out of himself until he saw his crew cease rowing and the oars trail like the wings of a tired bird. Then the defeated crew went past him. There were breaks in the swing, heads nodded on the catch, backs were bending, and bodies swaying athwartships. It was anything now to cross the line and rest.

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Hastings had a new realization of what these whipped oarsmen felt, they whose high hopes were wrecked, whose labor, as long and as faithful as that of the winners, had gone for naught. After all, he did not belong with the winners, he was one of the losers, and he wished he might shake their hands. He cheered with all his voice, and Number Five of Harvard turned a drawn face to this salutation so close at hand, and in a quick glance recognized his dethroned rival, whom he had once met on the lawn at Gales Ferry. The man in the boat flashed a smile of comradeship to the man in the launch, and both felt better for the incident.

Cynthia was clapping her hands, then she tore the violets from her gown and flung them as far as she could toward the distant crew.

"Yale! Yale!" she cried. "Cast off. I want to work the launch down that way to see them. Wasn't it glorious? Oh, I never saw anything half so fine. I want to shake their hands, every one of that beautiful, blessed crew. I'd give ten years of my life to be one of those men at this moment."

She had not looked at Jack, but he was determined to obtrude himself somehow.

"How about the man who worked just as hard, and gets none of this hero-worship? Doesn't he deserve anything from you?"

"Poor old Jack!" she said tenderly. "Why, I forgot all about you for a little while. It is a shame you are not there. You ought to have tried just a

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little bit harder, hadn't you? Now you can't be a hero, but don't you care. We are all as sorry as sorry can be."

The launch had daringly poked a passage close to the float onto which the crew was now clambering from the shell. Big brown, half-naked men were hugging each other, and clumsily dancing in stockinged feet. Eagerly Cynthia asked her companion:

"Do tell me which is which, Jack. I want to be able to know them all by name. Which is the Stroke, and which is the man at Number Five? I want to see if he looks like you."

Hastings gave the information very soberly. The Stroke caught sight of his clouded face, and yelled to his fellows:

"Hey, here's Jack Hastings! Three long cheers for him. Are you ready?"

The cheer given by men still struggling to regain their normal breathing came so gratefully to Hastings that he felt like whimpering, because *they* understood. The launch was deftly steered alongside the float, and grabbing the outstretched hand of Hastings, the Stroke nearly pulled him overboard, as he whispered:

"Jack, I am glad you could see the race with the Only One. It must have helped you over the rough places. There is nothing like it when things look blue. God bless you both. Where is your mother? Be sure to come down to New Haven to-night, won't you?"

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The Stroke jumped to help load the oars on the coaching launch just as Cynthia said to Hastings:

"Why didn't you present me? I think you are a stupid old Jack."

Where was his mother? Guilty and ashamed, he stammered:

"Please set me ashore anywhere as soon as you can, and I shall be eternally grateful."

She pouted.

"Do you want to leave me so soon? Certainly, I will put you ashore if you wish. You have been as cross as a bear. You must do penance by coming off to dinner to-night."

"Thanks, I have another engagement," said he, shortly.

The observation-train had gone to the station, and it must be emptied of its freight by this time. There was no more time for talk with Cynthia, and he did not know what else to say to her to whom the day was an outing, vastly exciting and enjoyable. Still he sought one last word of sincere realization of his ill-fortune, and found no response to his own heart-hunger. He said "Good-by," as he stepped ashore, and holding her hand for a moment:

"I am glad that you have had such a pleasant afternoon, Cynthia. A friend in need is a friend indeed."

The tribute touched and pleased her, and the irony of it wholly escaped her, as she gayly called after him:

"Be sure you don't forget to look us up to-night."

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VI

Hastings did not look behind him as with lowered head he ran along the railroad-track to the station, jumped into a cab and urged the driver to speed to the house where his mother must be waiting.

Some one within heard his footstep, knew it for what she craved most to hear, and was in the doorway of her room when he saw her. Picking her up like a child, he covered her white hair, her tired face, her hands with kisses, and as she clung weeping on his breast, he carried her to a big armchair in the bay window. He was on his knees with his rumped head in her lap when she found broken voice to say:

"Oh, Jack, are you well? Are you all right? My own precious boy! I have come to comfort and love you. Nothing else matters. Nothing else matters to me, now that I have found you safe and sound."

She twisted her slim fingers in his thick brown hair, and as she felt the warm pressure of his head in her lap, the years had stepped aside, and he was the little boy who used to flee to that dear sanctuary in every time of trial. And to her this was only another trouble, which only Mother could understand and clear from his path. When at length he looked up, she was shocked to see the shadow circles under his eyes, and the nervous twitching of the mouth that was so very like his mother's. He was sobbing, and not ashamed of it, as he murmured:

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"I have been disgraced and disappointed, but I don't care any more now that I have found you. Are you all right, little mother? Did you think I had deserted you?"

She told him of the race as she had seen it, and was with difficulty dissuaded from planning to search out the Head Coach, crying with the angry sparkle he loved of old:

"It is not ladylike, Jack, but I would like to scratch his horrid eyes out. Of course, he should have kept you on the crew, but we are not going to cry over spilt milk, are we? I want you to tell me all about it—everything—so that we can look and find some consolation. Every cloud has a silver lining."

While he carried the tale down to the parting with Cynthia she smiled and frowned in turn, and wiped her eyes before he had finished. A mother's intuition read between the lines and when the rueful confession halted, her arm stole around his neck, and she kissed him again.

"It is a sad story," she said; "but never let me hear that word disgrace as long as you live. Of course, I was nearly killed about it to-day, and I should have been crying for four nights at sea if I could have heard the news before I started. But it would have been only because you were unhappy and disappointed. What else are mothers for than to understand when the world seems upside down? When you were seven years old, you were kept home from a Sunday-school picnic by the chicken-pox, and you told me in floods

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of tears that you didn't 'b'lieve you could never, never, be happy again.' I knew how small your world was, and that the chicken-pox was big enough to fill it to overflowing.

"Now, you have tried your best, you rowed as well as you knew how, and the crew was everything to you, just as it ought to be. But some day you may have larger troubles, and they, too, shall pass away, and more and more you will come back to the simple gospel of living I have tried to teach you, that there is only one standard by which to judge success or failure. Is the thing worth while, and have you done your best in the best way to gain it? I don't mean to preach, my boy mine. You don't want that. You want your mother. I know, I know."

She stroked his cheek as he went deep into his heart, and brought up more than he had ever told her before of his dreams of love, first love, and of what he had been building. His mother knew that she must be careful, and she hesitated, as if pondering how best to speak her view-point.

"She did not understand, poor girl. It is not all her fault, and it is not yours, laddie boy. When the race began and I saw that you were not in the crew, it seemed as if I were in the depths of a bad dream. I was with you all the way, and I thought of nothing else. And I know that while you would have been with me if you could, yet if the girl were here you would wish in your heart to find her first. No, don't try to deny it. But she did not know at all what it meant

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to you, she could not know. But if she had loved you, she would have understood as I did. We will talk about her all night if it will make your heartache any better. What are we going to do now?"

The boy straightened himself and threw back his wide shoulders, because his mother saw no cause for reproach in his downfall. But he did not want to see the crew again, and he wished to avoid the riotous celebration soon to burst. Obviously the best plan was to go to New Haven at once, where they could find refuge in his rooms, and pack his trunk for the vacation departure.

To him this little journey from New London was a panic flight, to her it was made radiant by the one fact that her boy had come back to her. After dinner in a quiet corner of the college town, they went to his rooms on the campus. The sight of the two twelve-foot oars on the walls, his own trophies of two victories, their handles stained dark with the sweat of his hands, made her turn to him as they entered:

"Nothing can ever take those away from you, with all their splendid story of success."

The boy looked at them for an instant, then brushed a hand across his tired young eyes.

"Better make kindling of them," he said. "Look at that one over there. I won it as a raw, overgrown Freshman, and three years later I can't do as well as I did then. Matthews, 'the sub,' will hang my third oar on his wall next year. I am going to curl up on

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the window-seat and rest a while, mother. I feel all played out."

She, too, was very tired, but felt that her son had need of her, and she tried to soothe him to sleep, and smiled as she found herself half unconsciously humming a slumber-song she had crooned to him twenty years before. Her photograph was on his desk, and framed near it the winsome face of Cynthia Wells, and she crossed the room to look closely and comprehendingly at the girl who had acted in her own world as naturally as had the youth in his. When she returned to the window, her son was asleep, and she softly kissed him.

Looking across the green, she saw a blaze of red fire that colored the evening sky. Rockets and Roman candles began to spangle the illumination, and presently the far-away blare of a brass band crept nearer. She knew that these were signs of the home-coming of the crew, of the celebration whose glories Jack had eloquently portrayed. It was not disloyalty to him that she should want to see what it was like, although she knew he would not want to be there. Yet, feeling traitorish qualms, she scribbled a little note, saying she had gone out for a "breath of fresh air," and stole down the staircase.

When she came to the corner the procession was rioting up Chapel Street toward the campus. The band preceded a tally-ho, on top of which were the heroes in their white boating uniforms, nervously dodging innumerable fiery darts aimed straight at

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them by wild-eyed admirers on the pavement. Behind, surging from curb to curb, skipped thousands of students and townspeople, arm in arm, in common rapture. The wavering line of fireworks told that the tail of the parade was blocks and blocks away.

The coach was stopped at the corner of the campus, as a hundred agile figures swarmed up the wheels, and dragged the crew to earth, from which they were instantly caught up, and borne on tossing shoulders to the stone steps of the nearest recitation-hall. There they were held aloft, still struggling, while cheers greeted each by name.

VII

Now, the celebration programme would have been halting and inadequate if the assistant manager of the Yale Navy had not hurried to New Haven on an earlier train. He had been in the car with John Hastings, and took it for granted that the sweet-faced woman of the silvery hair must be his mother. He was plunging through the crowd on the stone steps, trying to rescue the oarsmen in order to head them toward the banquet-hall, when beneath the arc-light on the corner, a little way out of the tumult, he saw the timid lady for whom he had felt much sympathy. The assistant manager was ably fitted for his official task of looking after details, because he fairly boiled over with initiative, and with him to think was to act, as the powder

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speeds the bullet. He dashed across to Mrs. Hastings, and said, with a hurried and apologetic bow:

"Beg pardon, but this is Jack Hastings's mother, are you not? Yes, thank you, I was sure of it. It may seem presumptuous, but I have heard lots about you, and Jack has convinced me that you are the finest mother in the world, bar one. I have been so infern—so very busy since I got in town from New London, that I have had no time to look up Jack. We want him at the dinner, everybody does, and we want you just as much. In fact, you must be my special guest, and hear the speeches, anyhow, if you won't stay any longer. Jack's asleep, is he? Well, we'll wake him up, all right."

The alarmed little mother tried to protest several things at once. Jack had sworn he would not go to the dinner, and that he would break the neck of the man who should try to rout him out. Of course, Jack would not do that really, but he was all worn out and needed the rest. Please not to disturb him, and she would not dream of going without him, and she did not want to go at all. Her earnestness was almost tearful, but the assistant manager, who had heard perhaps the first ten words, darted off and was back with two young men whose fists were full of cannon crackers. He had each fast by the coat-collar, and shoving them into the foreground like a pair of marionettes, he breathlessly blurted:

"Mrs. Hastings, may I present Mr. Stower and Mr. 'Stuffy' Barlow, both Seniors, highly dignified and

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proper persons. This is Jack Hastings's mother. You are to escort Mrs. Hastings down to Harmonium Hall, and see that she has a nice seat in the gallery or near the door. No trouble at all, Mrs. Hastings, I assure you. Awfully glad to have had the honor of meeting you. Good-by. I'll run over to Jack's room and drag him down there in five minutes."

Mrs. Hastings had all the sensations of being kidnapped. She tried to protest, even to resist, but was like a leaf caught up in a torrent, as Messrs. Barlow and Stower, both talking at once, handed her politely but firmly into the depths of a hack, climbed in after her, and slammed the door.

Almost in a twinkling, as it seemed to the agitated mother, she was being ushered carefully into a small music-gallery overlooking the banquet-floor, where, from a shadowy corner she could overlook the festivities in semi-seclusion. She waited only until her genial abductors were out of sight, and then slipped furtively toward the stairs, intending, of course, to return to her boy if he did not appear forthwith. Uneasy and fluttering, she was also keenly interested, for had not John placed this picture before her, and what it had meant to him in other years? He met her at the top of the stairway, looking sheepish and alarmed. She tried to explain, but he cut her short with a laugh:

"I know all about it. You fell a victim to the wiles of a terrible set of villains. You couldn't help yourself. Neither could I, when I heard how you had

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been spirited away. Now you are going to stay and see the fun, aren't you?"

She tried to persuade him to leave her and take his seat with the celebrants.

"No, I have lost my seat," said he, with the old shadow on his face. "I don't belong there any more. . . . I don't want to be seen. But the fellows promised not to give me away. It is pretty nervy for me to come at all. But I am here only to escort you."

She took his hand and held it while they sat well back in a corner of the gallery and watched the company trooping in. To the young oarsmen, so clean-cut and strong, tired but happy, all their woes and fears forgotten, this was their day of days. In a long row were seated the University eight, the substitutes, and the Freshman crew, which had also won its race. At the head of the table was "Big Bill" Hall, stout oarsman of thirty years ago, now a much stouter citizen. The captain of the crew was at his right, and at his left hand the beaming Head Coach, burned as black as any Indian. In another group were the younger coaches, most of them old strokes and captains, and mighty men at Yale in their time. Other oarsmen of other days were welcomed, regardless of the formality of invitation. Perhaps forty men around the board had known the test of the four-mile course, brothers of the oar through nearly two generations of rowing history.

The outcast was able to keep his poise until the Glee Club quartet rose to sing, by special request of

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the Head Coach, "Jolly Boating Weather." The first tenor had a sweet and sympathetic voice, and he had heard the story of the singing of this song on the float just before the race, wherefore he did the verses uncommonly well.

Then the old fellows, some with grizzled thatches, and some with thatches scant and thin, had their innings and pounded the table to emphasize their harmonious declaration that

"Twenty years hence such weather
Will tempt us from office-stools,
We may be slow on the feather,
And seem to the boys old fools,'
But we'll still swing together——"

The song carried to Hastings as the last straw to break the endurance which had pulled him through the long, long day. He did not want his mother to see his quivering lip, and he thought she would not perceive that he was near to breaking down. Did she know? Why, she felt his emotion in the hand she clasped tighter than before, she read his thoughts in the very beat of his pulse, and when he whispered that he must have caught a cold in the head because he was getting an attack of sniffles, she needed no words to enlighten her understanding. If his tears were those of a boy, then she thanked God she was childish enough to feel with him at every step and turn of the way that was blocked by the biggest sorrow

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of his life. She asked him whether he would like to go home. He shook his head and said that he would stick it through to the end.

VIII

Speeches were in order, and the presiding alumnus hove himself out of his chair, and hammered the table with the rudder of the winning shell, thoughtfully lifted and provided by the able assistant manager. There were cheers for "Big Bill" Hall, of the '73 crew, more cheers for Yale, and before the uproar was quiet his great voice roared above it as he began to speak. Presiding Judge of the Supreme Court of a New England State when at home, he was all a Yale man come back to his own upon such occasions as this, and because Yale men loved him they called him "Big Bill."

"When we get into the big world beyond the campus," he began, "it may seem to some that this intensity of purpose, this absorption in a sport, were childish, yet we do not regret those convictions, we are proud of them, for these same qualities make for manhood in the larger duties of a wider horizon. And, after all, are the things for which we are striving in after-years any more worth while? Are they always sweetened and uplifted by so much devotion, unselfishness, loyalty, and singleness of purpose? Are they thrilled by as fine a spirit of manliness? We hear it said that the old Yale spirit is losing its savor, that men are working for themselves rather than for the

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college, that they hold in light esteem things that were sacred and vital to us. I do not believe these criticisms are true.

“The young man I wished most to see is not here to-night. He would not come to help us celebrate a victory over an ancient and honorable foe. He believes that he has lost the respect of his comrades and that he has been proven a failure. For three years he has been a University oar. This season he could not keep his weight down to the limit of former years, he found that he could not keep up with the eight, although he tried as never before, and he was not helping the crew. The day came when he had to be removed, and he experienced as bitter disappointment as could befall a young man of spirit and pluck. The coaches and captain expected that he would throw up training, leave the Quarters, and go home. It was the natural thing to do, because he was cut to the soul, and it was like attending his own funeral services to hang around the place.

“Without a word he slipped into the place of a substitute, and did a substitute’s work as long as there was need of it. I venture to say that he would have scrubbed out the boat-house if it would have been of service to the crew. Do you know why he took this stand? Not because he did not care, but because he cared so much. When he offered to help as a substitute, he said:

““If I can help the Yale shell to go faster by being out of it, I am glad of it. That is what I am rowing

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for. And if I can be of any use as a substitute, why, that is what I am here for, too. It is all for Yale, isn't it?"

"He did not know that he was overheard. It was not meant to be overheard. But it expressed his whole attitude, and he stood by it to the end. You youngsters who licked Harvard to-day deserve all the praise and rejoicing that comes to you. We are all proud of you, and we know how hard and well you have worked. But while you are the heroes of this celebration, *the* hero did not row with you. His name is 'Jack' Hastings, the man who was glad to help a Yale crew go faster by getting out of it.

"And when you hear it said that the Yale spirit is dying out, I want you to think of that remark. That man absorbed the spirit right here that made him take that view as a matter of course. It was because he did not think of anything else to be done under the circumstances that he epitomized the spirit that will make this old place great as long as it stands. Endowments and imposing buildings can never breed that spirit. It grows and blossoms as the fruitage of many generations of tradition, and when Yale loses it, she is become an empty shell, a diploma factory, and no longer a nursery of the right kind of manhood needed in this country.

"Three long cheers for 'Jack' Hastings, who, if he did not help to win this race, will help to win races long after he is gone from the campus world, and so long as his words are remembered Yale men on foot-

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ball-field, on track and diamond, and on the old Thames course will feel their inspiration. Are you ready?"

The men rose the length of the table, and shouted, with napkins waved on high. Before the last "Rah, rah, rah, Hastings, Hastings, Hastings," subsided, the assistant manager had become red in the face and exceedingly uneasy. He wrestled with a weighty ethical problem, because while he had pledged his word not to reveal the secret of Hastings's presence within sight and sound of this ovation, he realized that to lead him in would be a crowning and dramatic episode. A compromise was possible, however, and he slipped around the table and whispered in the ear of "Big Bill" Hall.

In the gallery the little mother had shrunk farther back into the shadows, half afraid of this uproar, yet happier than ever before in her life. She looked at her boy, sitting close beside her, his face hidden so that she could not see the illuminating joy in it, the dazed look of unreality, as if he were coming through dreamland. There was no surprise in her mind. Of course this triumph was no more than what was due, and she could have hugged the massive chairman as a person of excellent discernment. The boy whispered:

"He does not really mean it, mother. There is some mistake. He has been out of college so long that he does not know what things mean."

She patted his burning cheek and whispered:

"Why, I knew it all the time. But you would not

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believe it if your mother said you were a hero. I wonder how the Head Coach feels now? I wish I——”

With a quick leap Jack had wrenched himself away and was clattering down the stairs. He had seen the whispered conference and “Big Bill” Hall staring up at the gallery, and fearing that he was trapped and betrayed, he fled into the street and was running for the nearest corner before the assistant manager could pass through the hall to the foot of the stairs. The conspirator had not promised silence regarding Hastings’s mother, and before she knew what was happening he was by her side, so quickly that she thought it was Jack returned to her. As she looked up in alarm, the assistant manager had her reluctant hand, and was insisting upon leading her to the railing of the little gallery. She gazed at the upturned faces, and there was a moment of expectant silence. Then Judge Hall shouted the command: “Three long cheers for Jack Hastings’s mother.”

She was trembling now, and the lights and faces below swam in a mist of tears as she timidly bowed. Then, as the full realization of the tribute swept over her like an engulfing wave, she became youthfully erect, she smiled, and blew kisses with both her slender hands toward the long table. She was thanking them in behalf of her boy, that was all, because they, too, understood. Certain that he must be waiting not far away, she bowed again, and hurried down the stairs, meeting the Head Coach in the hall. His face was serious, his manner abashed, as he said:

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"I want to ask whether you will shake hands with me, Mrs. Hastings. I am proud that you do me the honor. I wish to tell you something more than you have heard to-night, and I am going to tell it to all the men, when I return to the room. Your son was too heavy to handle himself as well as he did last year and the year before. But I believe he would have rowed in the race if a mistake had not been made. I found out when it was too late that his rigging, or measurements, in the shell was not right for him, and it would have made considerable difference if he could have been shifted in time. It was wholly my fault, and nobody else was to blame in any way. I can never make it up to him, and my only consolation is that you have found what I have learned, that he is a good deal finer man than we thought him, and an honor to Yale beyond all the rest of us. You must hate me, more than any one else in the world. I remember how my mother shared my joys and sorrows in the crew."

The mother put out her hand again, and clasped that of the Coach, as she said simply, but with a catch of emotion in her voice:

"I did hate you to-day. I thought you had broken my boy's heart. Now I have to thank you. God's ways are not our ways, and I rejoice that while I have lost a captain of the crew, I have gained a man, every inch of him, tried in the fire and proven. This is the happiest night of my life. I would rather have heard the speech of Judge Hall, and the cheers that followed

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it, than to have my son in four winning crews and captain of every one of them. Of course he is a hero. Didn't you know that?"

The Head Coach started to speak, when the elbow of "Big Bill" Hall nudged him. The bulk of him filled the passageway, and his voice boomed out into the night:

"If you don't bring that boy around to the hotel to see me in the morning, I will take back all I have said about him, Mrs. Hastings. Now I know where he gets all his fine qualities."

She blushed and courtesied, and the two men escorted her to the pavement, as John Hastings slipped from a doorway across the street and came over to them. His mother's escort, believing that he had been no nearer the banquet than this, made a rush for him, which he nimbly dodged, slipped his mother's arm in his.

"He is mine now," said she. "He has a previous engagement, and, besides, I don't want him spoiled. Good night to you. Come along, Jack, you are not too big to mind your mother, are you?"

The two walked slowly across the Green toward the campus. The communion of their uplifted souls was perfect, their happiness almost beyond words. She was first to break this rare, sweet silence, and strangely enough, she said nothing about the vindication and the triumph. Looking up into his face, she almost whispered:

"Are you caring so much that Cynthia disappointed

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you to-day, dear boy of mine? Does it hurt and rankle? I could see it in your eyes to-night. Do you want to marry her very much? Are you sure of your heart?"

He winced a little and held her arm tighter than before, as he replied:

"It has been my first real love-story, as you know. The thought of her has helped me over many a rough place. Before to-day she was always so quick to understand. And—and she seemed to like me better than any other fellow she knew. I was fairly aching to be worthy of her, to make my place in the world for her. I wasn't conceited enough to think she loved me. I was only hoping that some day— Any man has a right to do that, has he not?"

It was not easy for the mother to say what she wished to tell him, but at length her response was:

"I don't want you to think I am criticising her, or sitting in judgment, but you must not let her mar your faith and hope and happiness. I want to help you to guard those precious gifts. You must not blame her too much. You have been believing that she understood you, because you would have it that way. She is no older than you, a girl of twenty, accustomed to a wholly different life than yours. She was flattered by your attention, for you were a great man in her eyes. She liked you because no one can help liking you. But it made a difference when you were a hero knocked off his pedestal. And yet you expected to find in her sympathy, a balm that even your

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mother could not give. Poor lad, mothers are handy sometimes, but most boys do not find it out until their mothers are gone from them."

"I thought I knew her so well," said he, after another silence. "It looks as if I had amused her and nothing more. But I have found you, and I have fallen head over heels in love with you, mother mine, all over again, and I am going to kiss you right under this electric light."

Even yet she was not sure that she had sounded the depths of the ache in his heart, but as she looked up at the light in his campus rooms, she said softly:

"Some day you will understand, and will thank God your mother understood. He giveth you the victory unforeseen."

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THE captain of the Yale eleven was a pale, morose young man who had no use for idle conversation. When off the field he spoke so seldom that a remark was an event. Other men had sat at the training-table with him through a whole season and heard him utter nothing more loquacious than a request to pass the butter. His countenance was thin and melancholy, his physique so far from robust that he appeared to have one foot in the grave. It seemed cruel to permit him to endure the rough hazards of football. Round-shouldered, emaciated, he was the best end rush in America.

It was football genius, of course; brains instead of brawn, a nervous energy that flamed into action swift and sure. He followed the ball with an uncanny sixth sense. Let the enemy fumble and there was Captain Fred Varney ready to take advantage of it. His tackling was within the rules, but grimly ferocious. He could no more be shaken off than a bulldog, and he slammed his man into the earth instead of dragging him down. After watching his play one would have concluded that football was anything else than a pastime.

The words were few when he talked to his team, but every phrase had a bite to it. Unsmiling, masking his emotions, with no intimate friends, his was a sin-

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gular personality for an undergraduate of twenty-one. There was none of the spirit of youth in him. He seemed to have been designed for the sole purpose of turning out a winning football machine.

No one could have been more unlike him than that blithesome, noisy member of the squad, Bob Sedgwick, who had been given a trial at guard in the varsity line-up. And when he was actually selected to play in one of the early games, and the coaches were inclined to keep him in the position, his enthusiasm was beyond words. Yale was the greatest place that ever happened, the sophomore class was the finest on record, and now he had a fighting chance to win his "Y" on Fred Varney's eleven. At least a hundred of his classmates congratulated him. His was the gift of popularity, and there would have been as many to admire him if he had won no fame whatever as an athlete.

The captain took pains to chasten and humble the soul of young Robert Sedgwick, laboring to convince him that he was a wretched apology of a player, and a holy show at left guard. The victim took it good-naturedly, and strove with might and main to mend his faults. But it cut deep to hear Varney's gruff voice bark briefly:

"Rotten, Sedgwick; rotten! Let that man through again, you big stuff, and I'll know for sure you have a yellow streak."

The coaches were less unkind, although there were too many of them, and their shouted orders were con-

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fusing. When they got in each other's way, and Varney's patience was overtaxed, he waved them to the side-lines and they obeyed with astonishing meekness. Here was a captain, indeed, who proposed to lead his own team. These older men, graduates of renown, did not quite know how to handle him, but he was getting results in his own grim fashion, and the players feared him more than they feared the entire Yale faculty.

In the dressing-room Bob Sedgwick confided his grief to the other guard, "Hank" Tripp, veteran of two seasons.

"He makes me so mad that I want to turn around and paste him. Did you hear him tell me I was yellow? And he said it with that snarl out of the corner of his mouth."

"He called me a beefy pot-walloper yesterday," calmly replied Tripp, whose temper was phlegmatic, "and he threatened to kick the pants off me. Don't let him discourage you. It's all for the best. We need poking up or Varney wouldn't be so nasty."

"Was he born with that grouch?" curiously demanded Sedgwick. "Does he wear it all the year? Has he any of the attributes of a human being?"

"I roomed with him for six months, and he was far from chatty company. It was restful, on the level, to get away from all the foolish dialogue. Human? The man has a heart as big as a football."

"Then I ought not to take it too seriously when he damns me as a coward and a quitter?"

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"Forget it, son. All in the game! A stiff upper lip and follow the ball! You are doing all you can, and Fred Varney knows it."

At the practice next day Bob Sedgwick was given something else to think about. The coaches were even more active than usual, and half a dozen of them swarmed over the field. During an interval they put their heads together for consultation, and presently there joined them a tall, fair man in the early thirties. He was good-looking and well-dressed, presumably acquainted with clubs and late hours. His face suggested that of young Sedgwick, although weaker and less wholesomely frank. He greeted the group of coaches with effusive cordiality, accosting them by their first names, slapping them on the back. They were awkwardly unresponsive, as if this old friend were unwelcome, but he was not to be so easily rebuffed.

"I found I could come East for a month or two," he exclaimed, "and I made a bee-line for New Haven. Perfectly bully to find all you chaps on the job! Lend me a sweater and I'll show these infants how we used to play full-back. I can stay with them for the rest of the season as well as not."

"Er—I see, Joe—but you will have to speak to Captain Varney about it," returned one of the others. "The coaching staff is recruited to full strength. The system was changed this year. We came back by invitation of the captain. He made out his own list."

"He did? Well, he overlooked a bet," was the un-

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perturbed comment. "According to the newspaper dope, you haven't a sure-fire toe artist on the team. Wofully weak! Not to brag, but as a drop-kicker was I in a class by myself or not?"

"You were one of the best backs that ever wore a shoe," agreed another coach, "but the decision isn't up to us, Joe."

The atmosphere was distinctly unfriendly, and the expert drop-kicker turned with a shrug to look at the team. Robert Sedgwick had to be shoved into the line before he awoke from an unhappy trance. Twice he bungled the signals and spoiled the formations. The captain lashed him with bitter insults, but he heard them not until Hank Tripp savagely muttered, as they untangled themselves from a scrimmage: "The scrub eleven for yours if you don't buck up. Are you hurt? Hit over the head? Call the trainer if you feel queer."

"Never mind," murmured Sedgwick. "I'm all right now. Nothing serious. I won't do it again."

He set himself alertly and opened the line at the next signal to let the runner and his interference crash through inside of tackle, but it was done mechanically, his mind still elsewhere. He had seen the tableau, the hostile coaches, and the affable intruder, and he had grasped its significance. His brother Joe, graduated a dozen years earlier, had come back to Yale, where he was not wanted, where even his old friends gave him the cold shoulder. To Robert he had been little more than a sorrowful memory, estranged from

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the family whose name he had discredited, an exile from home. He was supposed to be on the Pacific coast, with some sort of a connection in the real-estate business, when last heard from.

The younger brother tried to persuade himself that Joe had made good and was determined to live down his record, but this was not easy to believe, for the prodigal son had not the air of genuine repentance. To Bob's critical eye he appeared coarsened and flashy, a trifle out of place in the company of self-respecting gentlemen.

Fred Varney drove the two elevens through twenty minutes of fiercely unremitting play before the two Sedgwicks had an opportunity of meeting. As the weary men trotted from the field, Joe picked up the ball, his manner careless and jaunty, and drop-kicked from the forty-yard line. Straight and true it soared between the posts, a beautiful feat which none of Varney's backs could have equalled. The coaches applauded, and the crowd of undergraduate spectators wondered who this wizard of the gridiron might be. With a laugh he intercepted Robert, who was in a shocking state of muddiness and wore a black eye.

"Hello, Bob! How's the kid? I didn't know you. I had to ask. Perhaps I couldn't have recognized you on the campus. Five or six years, isn't it? You were a chunk in short breeches—hadn't gone away to prep school. Left guard on the varsity? The old stuff! You can't keep a Sedgwick off the team."

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Joe spoke rapidly, in affectionate tones. The youngster's steady gaze disturbed him, as though his sincerity were weighed and doubted. They were, in fact, like strangers, and Bob, who could not pretend what he failed to feel, replied:

"You are a good deal of a surprise-party, Joe. Passing through town, are you, and dropped off to look over the team?"

"Better than that. Varney needs me. I'm at his service. I will fix it up with him right away. Good Lord, Bob, you fellows have a good offensive for straight ground gaining, but the kicking is awful, and the backs are a crude lot."

"Our best drop-kicker and punter sprained his ankle last week," said Bob, with spirit. "He will be fit again soon. Of course we have nobody as clever as you. Joe Sedgwick is a tradition."

"A live one," smiled the other. "Watch my smoke. See you after supper at your room? You are tied to the training-table, I suppose. Lucky kid!"

Bob nodded and slowly followed his comrades, halting once to look back at Joe, who had presented himself to the silent captain of the eleven. What happened at this interview was in the nature of a monologue, conducted by the genial Mr. Joseph Sedgwick. Fred Varney stood with his hands on his hips, gazing at the ground. The blue jersey, wet with sweat, clung to his angular shoulders, and was plastered against his gaunt ribs. The excitement of the game had died within him. His face, no longer aglow with

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a very fury of endeavor, was sad and severe. He sagged with weariness.

Joe Sedgwick began to comprehend why the coaches were under this young man's thumb. He was an extraordinary Yale captain. The great drop-kicker of other days lost somewhat of his self-assurance. This was like talking to a graven image. Sedgwick actually faltered before he finished, shorn of all his bluff and bluster. Varney heard him through, waited a moment, and said very quietly:

"You won't do. I wanted you when I planned the season's work, but your reputation killed you with me. You may be a great coach, Sedgwick, but you are a bad performer. I'll take my chances of losing to Harvard rather than let a crook help me win."

The insult staggered the older man. The color left his florid cheek, and he chewed his lip, glancing hastily about to discover if there had been an audience. He clinched his fists and moved a step closer, but Varney had resumed his weary, indifferent attitude, and made no effort to defend himself. Sedgwick's moral fibre had been weakened, and he had lived by his wits too long to be readily courageous in a crisis. Not that he desired a rough-and-tumble fight with this young ruffian of a Varney, but he should be able to compel an apology.

"How long have they been putting muckers in charge of Yale teams?" he stormily exclaimed.

"You passed a bad check or two, didn't you?" queried Varney, gloomily ignoring personalities. "And

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your father settled and kept you out of jail? You couldn't go straight even after that, so I have been told. You can't coach here. This team of mine is going to come through clean, understand?"

The truth was exceedingly difficult to combat. Sedgwick gasped, thrust his hands in his pockets, and blurted:

"You are infernally particular. I can coach rings around this bunch of sanctimonious dubs who are mishandling the team for you."

"Nothing doing! If you butt in to-morrow I shall have you thrown off the field, Mr. Sedgwick."

With this the captain walked away, pulling a sweater down over his head. The disgruntled Joseph stared after him, was about to pursue, thought better of it, and strode in the direction of the gate. For once his bomb-proof effrontery had been shattered. Revisiting the scenes of his youthful prowess had proved a most unsuccessful business. Under his breath he cursed the place as ungrateful, and the football captain as an impossible beast who deserved a dose of discipline. There had been no invitation to join the coaches for a jovial reunion supper at the training-table, and he therefore sought a familiar little restaurant upon whose walls were displayed the framed photographs of Yale teams and crews of many college generations. There Mr. Sedgwick beheld himself—lithe, handsome, alert, the twin likeness of that boyish brother of his who now played left guard.

Bob was another sort, with a saving grace of steady-

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ness and common sense, reflected Joe, not apt to make a mess of life. No doubt he kept out of debt and steered within his allowance. Bob was alone in his room when Joe appeared, and spoke pleasantly, but was obviously perturbed. The elder brother had been a source of family tribulation, and his presence in New Haven was an embarrassment.

"That eleven of yours is sure to be licked, Bob," cheerfully exclaimed the black sheep. "The best material in the world would be wasted with that fat-headed crowd of coaches and a stubborn idiot like Varney taking all the power into his own hands."

"It is early in the season to size up the situation, isn't it?" replied Robert, nettled by this cock-sure verdict, but resolved to avoid a quarrel.

"Not for a man with a football eye, my boy. Yale is in a rut and doesn't know how to get out of it. Listen to me and I'll tell you what's the matter."

Swiftly, with a lucid, penetrating intelligence that amazed the Sophomore, Joe analyzed the team as he had watched it during a brief period of practice, indicating the flaws in tactics and how to mend them. He suggested new formations, radical and sensational, which he said were his own invention. An enthusiast sure of his ground, he talked with brilliant, confident ease.

"Say, Joe, but you have kept right up with the game and a little ahead of it," cried Robert. "That stuff sounds great. I didn't know you were a football genius."

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"Thought I could kick, and nothing more? Man, I dream football! You chaps have one coach to drill the backs and another for the tackles, and a third for the centre men, and so on, and this barbarian Varney to put the fear of God into you, but nobody to pull the thing together and teach grand strategy. And they won't give me a chance."

"They turned you down, Joe? What put it into your head to come and offer your services? I can't figure it out."

"I hoped to be taken on because they pay a coach's expenses," was the unashamed confession. "It was a last resort, to tide me over a couple of months. I am on my uppers, as usual."

"I suspected it was something like that," sighed Bob. "I haven't pictured you as a very loyal Yale man."

"After the way I was treated this afternoon? That cured me of any 'dear old college chum' nonsense. Hit a man when he's down! Fine spirit!"

"Why not blame yourself, Joe? Has the college any reason to be proud of you?" hotly retorted Bob.

"Come, none of that!" And the elder brother looked ugly. "Don't be fresh. Let's get down to business. I don't want to hang around New Haven. A hundred dollars will help until something else turns up. I have one or two propositions in sight. Imitate a young man filled with brotherly love, if you please, and take me to your bank in the morning."

"I have to run on a pretty close margin," slowly

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replied Bob. "The folks think you had too much money to spend in college, and—well, it gave you extravagant tastes, perhaps. Anyhow, they give me less than half as much as you had. A hundred dollars? I can't spare that much, honestly."

Joe became sullen, resembling a spoiled child. He walked the floor before he said, with a contemptuous laugh:

"Held up to you as the awful warning, am I? Do as you like about that hundred. If you can't dig it up, I am liable to get drunk and raise Hades on the campus, and disgrace your college career. I am some Indian when I warm up."

"That sounds like blackmail to me," angrily exclaimed the younger brother. "You deserve to be thrown down-stairs. If I stake you to the cash will you promise to let me alone hereafter? I don't propose to have you assume that you can come to New Haven and pull my leg whenever you feel like it. It's rough to say, Joe, but I simply can't have another scene like that on the football-field to-day."

"Welcomed by my loving friends, you mean? It must have harrowed your childish emotions. I give you my word. The shadow of Joseph Sedgwick will trouble you no more. Do I get the hundred?"

"After chapel to-morrow. There is no getting away from the fact that you are my only brother. What have you been doing lately? I haven't heard a word from home about you."

"Here, there, and everywhere, Bob. I am a roll-

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ing stone. Let it go at that. Far be it from me to bring a blush to your downy cheek by reciting the adventures of a man who has a natural aversion for industry."

Nothing more could be coaxed from the prodigal in the way of biography. He much preferred to talk football, and when they returned to this absorbing topic, Bob found his society no longer distasteful. They patched up a truce, and ended the evening quite amiably. After all, they were of the closest kin, and there were unclouded associations of Bob's early boyhood to draw them together, and he could remember when Joe was an idol and a hero beyond compare.

When they parted next day, Robert thoughtfully escorted him to the train in order to be certain he left town. The scapegrace was moved to say:

"My conscience was not dead, but sleeping. Honestly, kid, I dislike separating you from this coin by methods which savor of a hold up. However, necessity knows no law. Don't laugh. I have a notion of paying it back some day. You may hear from me. When you write home just tell them that you saw me, nothing more, if you please."

"Why don't you write?" replied Bob, with feeling. "Dad is hostile, but mother keeps your room all ready and waiting for you."

Joe turned away, hanging his head, and his demeanor was more forlorn than jaunty as he swung himself aboard a New York train. Bob was reminded of him at the football-field that afternoon when the

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captain called him aside to say in his curt, morose fashion:

"Your brother gone? Sorry I had to roast him. I didn't like hurting your feelings. He is a chesty person, and I had to bump him hard to get rid of him. You understand?"

"Perfectly, Fred. You did your duty. It was an unfortunate impulse on his part."

"I have to follow the ball all the time," said Varney, stating his doctrine of life in these few words.

Among what were called the minor games of the season was one scheduled with Bitteringer College. This institution had only a few hundred students, but football ardor was rampant, and this was to be the first opportunity of measuring strength with so famous a foe as Yale. There were rumors that the eleven had been recruited by methods rather dubious, and inducements not wholly scholastic. A few wealthy alumni had lavishly subscribed to a fund for the purpose of making an impression in the football-world, and the report came to New Haven that their slogan was anything to beat Yale.

Within a week after Joseph Sedgwick had vanished into the unknown, Bob received from him a letter containing this interesting information:

I signed a contract yesterday to coach at Bitteringer for the rest of the season, with a renewal clause at a fancy salary if I deliver the goods. In New York I happened to run across a sporty pal from Toledo who was expelled from this busy little Bitteringer College some years ago, and shouts louder for his

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Alma Mater than if he had been given a string of diplomas and degrees. He had been trying to locate me, it seems. He rushed me straight up here, a meeting of the football advisory committee was called, and I named my own terms. They know real talent when they find it and are not so fussy as your crowd.

A huskier set of blacksmiths than these pets of mine never ripped up a rush-line, and I have a drop-kicker warranted to give you chaps heart disease. I shall teach them some real football. I am out to trim dear old Yale, my boy. You are welcome to pass it on to that merry wight, Varney. I hope to make him look more than ever like the victim of some great sorrow.

You will call me a renegade, I presume. Piffle! Yale would let me starve to death. Revenge is sweet. If I could afford it, I would coach Bittering College for nothing if I honestly thought she could give Yale a drubbing. I will not aim too many heavy plays at left guard, unless you weaken, for I should really hate to see you put in a hospital, but it will be no fault of mine if Varney isn't carried off by the head and the heels. Your affectionate brother,

JOE.

This letter offended young Bob, whose ideals of honor and loyalty were keenly sensitive. Other Yale men were coaching the teams of other colleges, but they displayed none of this vindictive, traitorous spirit, nor would they associate themselves with an eleven whose reputation was tainted with professionalism, even though the charges were unproven. He was reluctant to show the letter to Varney and further besmirch the name of Sedgwick. The Yale captain was capable of taking care of himself, and threats to "do him up" were an old story. When attempted, it was

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invariably the other fellow who required first aid to the injured.

The coaches took the Bitteringer game seriously as soon as the newspapers announced that Joe Sedgwick had been given command. They respected his talent and surmised that he bore them no good-will. It was decided in council to put into the contest the most powerful combination that could be mustered, and to perfect certain plays which had been reserved for later development. The impossible Sedgwick taunted the Yale coaching staff in printed interviews as incompetent and out of date. This was so irritating that the team was worked harder than it should have been, and the importance of the game was magnified. Secret practice was ordered, and the gates of the field were guarded with unusual care.

A gang of laborers had begun digging a trench for a water-pipe at one end of the enclosure. They showed little interest in the battling football-squads, and an Irish foreman saw to it that they assiduously applied themselves to the pick and shovel. There joined them one day a trampish individual in earth-stained overalls who professed to be eager to break his back in the ditch in order to ward off starvation from his numerous household. He was tall, well-built, and fair-haired, but a bit flabby for hard labor. The foreman was short-handed, and put this worthy applicant on the pay-roll.

He went at it pluckily, but his wind was poor, and the crop of blisters excessively painful. Now and then

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he snatched a moment's ease when the foreman's back was turned, and as he leaned on a shovel his keen eyes sought the field on which the varsity eleven was savagely hammering away at its new and secret formations. His face expressed an intelligent interest singular in a laborer. One might have said that he had seen better days. Occasionally he grinned, rubbed his unshaven chin, and remained cheerful even when cursed as a loafing, worthless hound.

At night this observant person made sundry entries and diagrams in a note-book before rubbing his back with liniment and betaking himself early to bed. He lasted no more than three days, and was then dismissed in disgrace. Still of a pleasant temper he departed from New Haven by trolley with his worldly goods in a bundle, changed his clothes in another city, and continued the return journey to Bittinger College. There he said nothing about his experience in the ditch, but it was noted that his stalwart blacksmiths were instructed in breaking up certain plays hitherto unknown to them.

The game occurred at New Haven. The students from Bittinger surged into town with a brass band and rolls of money which they flaunted with the boastful purpose of betting the sons of Eli to a standstill. There were three hundred of them, and they made noise enough for a thousand. Those too poor to pay the railroad fare found free tickets thoughtfully provided by that same devoted group of alumni which had financed the engagement of Mr. Joseph Sedgwick.

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The Yale campus rallied to support Fred Varney's team, determined to out-cheer and otherwise suppress this blatant invasion.

Young Bob Sedgwick felt stale and nervous. For the first time he dreaded the clash and stress of a hard contest. He envied the captain, moody, impassive, to whom one day was like another. Joe Sedgwick remained with his own men, ignoring Yale acquaintances, as though he came as a stranger. The situation was almost intolerable to the high-spirited younger brother, and he had a sense of foreboding that this game held possibilities even more tragic than defeat. Joe was about to use this team of his as an instrument of personal revenge, reckless of sportsmanship, bitterly determined to win at any cost. The twain avoided each other at the field. Bob discovered that a man might hate his own brother and wish him misfortune.

Fred Varney intended to launch a tremendous attack at the outset and demoralize the brawny opponents before their own scoring machine could be set in motion. No sooner, therefore, did Yale gain the ball after the kick-off than her heaviest backs plunged and tore into the line behind hurtling interference. They gained a little distance, and then opened for a combined shift and double pass which had been rehearsed in secret practice. The runner had no more than started, however, when he was tackled and thrown back for a considerable loss. The Bitteringer men appeared to know what he was about to do, and they drove at him as soon as the Yale quarter-back had

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shouted the signal. Again and again Varney tried to outwit them, but every attempt was futile. Before he could change tactics to meet this shrewd enemy, Yale was compelled to punt.

Now it was disclosed that Joe Sedgwick was something more than a cunning trickster. His pupils displayed an attack original, versatile, disconcerting, in which they were perfectly schooled. It was so difficult to solve and check that Yale was forced to retreat nearer and nearer her own goal. Precisely at the right moment a slim full-back swung his toe, there was a roar of joy from the Bittinger onlookers, and the ball soared clear of the ruck to carry its flight beyond the posts and fairly over them. A goal from the field and first blood for the invaders! Joe Sedgwick lighted a cigar, and laughed heartily. The demeanor of the Yale coaches was most amusing to him. They were far from happy.

Varney tried no more elaborate football. It was to be straight and simple, hammer and tongs, and his fighting spirit was in his team. Bittinger was undismayed. The rougher the game the better they liked it. As Bob Sedgwick lunged forward to grip a runner by the knees, the toe of a cleated shoe caught him fairly in the face. Dazed, bleeding, he picked himself up and staggered to one side. Varney ran up to ask:

"How bad is it? Shall I send in another man?"

"And let my brother think I quit for a mere scratch like this?" panted the Sophomore. "I can go the route. Some rough-house, this!"

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"I have played against gentler teams," rasped the captain. "Stand up to them. Follow the ball."

A few minutes later, Varney was holding a hand to his side. Two Bittinger men had jumped on him, unobserved by the officials, and a rib was cracked, but he waved the trainer away. He was in the game to stay, unless lugged off feet first, as so earnestly desired by Joseph Sedgwick, esquire. Through two full periods the issue swung back and forth like a stormy tide, and Yale was still unable to score. Then Bob Sedgwick, more severely jarred by the blow in the face than he realized, failed to hold his man, and Bittinger stampeded through for a clean ten yards. The left guard had become the weak link of the chain and Joe Sedgwick's quarter-back was quick to take advantage of it. Twice, thrice, with no intervals for signals, as fast as the men could scramble into position, they slammed through and over poor Bob, battering him breathless, breaking his heart that he should be the one to give way.

As soon as possible Varney ordered him to quit, and shoved in a substitute, but the damage had been wrought, and once more the deadly Bittinger full-back was within range of the Yale goal posts for a drop-kick. Graceful and easy was his poise, for all the world like Joe Sedgwick, as he stood with outstretched hands awaiting the ball, and with every bit of Joe's accuracy he lifted it to score the winning points. In this manner was the game ended, Yale beaten, unable to avert a dose of whitewash, humiliated by a college

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hitherto despised, and Joe Sedgwick had squared the account. One or two of the New Haven coaches congratulated him in manly fashion, but accused his team of rough play.

"Rough?" he replied, with a sneer. "Whine because you were licked, eh? Can't stand the gaff? My boys don't pretend to be ladylike, but they have forgotten more real football than your mollycoddles ever learned from you."

At supper Bob Sedgwick felt ashamed to face his comrades, blaming himself for the disaster. They were in low spirits, but had no word of criticism or reproof for him. Fred Varney glowered at his plate and spoke to no one during the meal. A cracked rib did not appear to discommode him. From this funereal atmosphere Bob fled to his room, leaving the others to discuss the catastrophe. Dropping into a chair beside the fireplace, he sat with his head in his hands, and concluded that his college career had been smashed. Had it not been for that last drop-kick Yale might have pulled herself together to hammer out a touchdown and avert defeat.

It was in this disconsolate mood that Joe Sedgwick found his younger brother when he entered without knocking. Bob scowled and failed to rise. If Joe had any tact or decency he would have kept out of the way. No visitor could have been more unwelcome. The prodigal affected not to notice the ungracious reception, and jovially exclaimed:

"It had to be done, kid, just to show them. Sorry

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you were on the list of victims. Mussed up your face and spoiled your beauty? Never mind. The girls like that sort of thing."

The raw flippancy of this so exasperated Bob that he burst out: "I was deliberately kicked in the face, and you coached the man that did it to play dirty football. I have finished with you, Joe, like the rest of the family. No wonder they disowned you."

"I must make allowance for your state of mind," said Joe, with a frown. "Tell me, what did you think of my outfit? Class to it? Any excuses to offer?"

"Not a darned one!" growled Bob, touching the livid bruise on his cheek. "You are a wonderful coach, Joe; so good that you didn't have to resort to that rough stuff to win. That is the pity of it. It was contemptible. Doesn't it hurt to have Yale men call you low and rotten?"

"Not a little bit, boy," but Joe winced as he spoke. "I cleaned up this afternoon—two years more at Bittinger at four thousand per, and plenty of time for loafing."

"Nonsense! Bittinger must be football mad!" cried Bob. "Four thousand dollars!"

"Beyond a doubt. I called in to give you the hundred, as I promised to do."

The door opened as Joe said this; it hung ajar for a moment, and the lean figure of Fred Varney was disclosed. The others failed to perceive him as he hesitated while Joe extracted a roll of money from his

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waistcoat pocket and tossed several bills on the table. Bob glanced at them, and remarked:

"Thank you. A hundred is correct. You were as good as your word."

Varney walked in, greeted Joe with a dour nod, and addressed himself to the Sophomore:

"The coaches are anxious to meet all the men to-night at my rooms—eight thirty. Be there, sure."

Joe tarried no longer, but bade Varney farewell with mocking deference, and grasped his brother's hand, telling him:

"The last time I am likely to afflict you, kid. I wish we might hit it off, but that is impossible, so we had better steer separate courses."

He tramped down-stairs, while Fred Varney stood gazing at the money on the table, and then his sombre eyes, prematurely cynical, regarded young Bob, who dreaded some slurring reference to the game. The captain appeared to find conversation more difficult even than usual, but he lingered, nevertheless, and said at length:

"I don't like the looks of this, Sedgwick. You will have to explain."

"Explain what?" demanded the puzzled Bob.

"That brother of yours hasn't a straight hair in his head. I hope to God you are different. I thought you were."

"What do you mean, Fred?"

"Joe Sedgwick knew our plays and signals in advance," coldly spoke the captain. "How did he get

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the information? None of his scouts sneaked in on us during secret practice, I'm sure of that. Did you tell him how to break up our formations?"

Shocked beyond expression, Bob Sedgwick could only stare with open mouth. It was like a nightmare that he should be thus accused of black treason to his comrades and his college. Brutally deliberate, Varney proceeded to state the case as he saw it.

"I walked in on you unexpectedly just now. Joe handed you a hundred dollars, as agreed, so you said. He was never known to pay his debts, so I suspect he gave you the money for value received. Also, you let Bittinger through the line this afternoon, and the result was a second goal from the field."

"You think I did that purposely?" protested Bob, his voice shaking with emotion.

"It didn't occur to me then. I thought of it when I found you and your brother together. You told me you felt fit to play after you got that kick on the cheek."

"I—I was shaken up some, but I just couldn't leave the field and let Joe suppose his men had knocked me out."

"You value his opinion more than I do," said Varney. "It's a pity you didn't put your own team first. If you were really hurt and unable to play the position, why didn't you tell me so?"

"It was a mistake," acknowledged Bob, his aspect bewildered and wrathful. "But you told me that you had a cracked rib. Were you fit to last through the

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game? Were you up to form? No, for you missed two or three tackles that I saw myself, and acted groggy through the last period of play."

"Perhaps that was a mistake on my part," doggedly replied Varney. "It never entered my head to suppose you might have purposely laid down on your job until I found your rascal of a brother handing you money, a bundle of it."

"He paid back a loan for once," vehemently asserted young Sedgwick. "Believe it or not! Just because he is a bad egg, does that condemn me?"

"You were hatched in the same basket," was the reply.

"That's enough," cried Bob, losing control of himself. "Joe was right when he called you a mucker, Fred Varney. No more Yale football for me as long as you have anything to do with it. You don't realize what you have said to me. You never consider anybody's feelings. Why, such a story as this may drive me out of college."

"I intend to keep it to myself," the captain muttered, his accents a trifle less harsh. "And you have come pretty near convincing me that I may be wrong. Better come to the meeting to-night and turn up for practice to-morrow."

"Never again, so help me!" passionately returned the left guard. "You had better get out of my room, or I'm liable to smash you over the head with a chair."

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Varney stood silent and awkward, as though he had not heard the threat. Then, with a sigh, he passed into the hall.

When Sedgwick failed to report at the field next day, the campus demanded to know the reason why. His friends interviewed him in droves, and were the more excited when they learned that he had left the training-table. He was no diplomat to parry and evade the eager questions, and his face, troubled and forlorn, indicated that something serious had occurred. It was not difficult to conclude that there had been a quarrel with Fred Varney. When hard pressed for information, Bob could not help admitting this much. The astute correspondent of a New York paper scented a football sensation, and subjected Bob to a searching cross-examination.

The downcast athlete did everything but lie in his attempt to escape publicity, but when a young man is the soul of candor and wears his heart on his sleeve, a fairly intelligent reporter is apt to put two and two together and hit somewhere near the mark. It was therefore hinted in a carefully worded despatch that a scandal of a kind unprecedented in Yale football had caused a member of the team to resign. The Sophomore class read between the lines and became zealous partisans of Bob Sedgwick, so zealous, in fact, that they marched to the field in a body and hissed Fred Varney when he appeared on the side-lines. This was also something new in Yale history, and it stirred up a tremendous amount of feeling. Varney was outwardly

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indifferent, but he was cut to the heart, and those who knew him best were aware of it.

At Bittinger College, that rolling stone, Joe Sedgwick, had found a scheme of existence that suited him perfectly. He was a personage, the idol of the populace, and his highly paid task was pure recreation. He forswore dissipation in order to set a proper example to his pupils, and had certain notions of remaining respectable. This enviable situation was disturbed when he chanced to discover upon a sporting page the story of a ruction at Yale, which he was led to assume concerned his younger brother. Joe read it most carefully, and pondered for some time. The boy had been too proud to write him. Sandy kid! It was fairly obvious. Varney had made a mess of it, as usual.

"The sulky beggar looked as if he smelled a rat when I left him that night in Bob's room," said Mr. Sedgwick to himself. "He would suspect his own grandmother of stealing pennies."

There was only one thing to do, but Joe flinched, and could not face it. He was too essentially selfish to play the knight-errant on the spur of the moment, and family ties were no argument to move him. Bob had repudiated him, along with the others, and yet he was fond of the boy, had always been fond of him, and knew him to be clean and straight and brave. Joe Sedgwick was by birth and breeding a gentleman, and there was a code which he had once professed. He had discarded, but not forgotten it. Resurgent,

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it clamored for recognition. For two days and nights he resisted, and the struggle was like a fit of illness.

"Bob doesn't dream I would even think of such a thing," he reflected. "That's a sad sort of a joke on me. I am a fool, no doubt of that, but I guess I'll have to see it through."

Sending no word to his brother, Joe set out for New Haven, and arrived in the morning. His first errand was to find the heavy-fisted foreman of the ditch, who had so summarily removed him from the pay-roll. The worthy man still swore at his Italian serfs in the enclosure beyond the varsity football-field, and he promptly identified Mr. Sedgwick, as requested.

"Three days on your time-book," said Joe, "and you can verify the date. It was before the Bittering game."

"I have a record of your time, sorr," was the respectful reply, "but would ye mind tellin' me if you fell heir to a fortune or married a rich widdy woman?"

"I found a better job, Mr. O'Conner. Will you do me a favor this afternoon? Just step across the field yonder, when I come for you, and tell the captain of the team that I was with your gang."

"With pleasure, sorr, and may ye keep a strangle-holt on prosperity. Maybe I would not have currsed ye so hard had I knowed ye was doin' it on a bet."

Fred Varney was recuperating by the surgeon's orders, and when Joe found him he was sitting on a bench with one of the coaches, while the team romped through a signal drill. The prodigal gave them no

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opportunity to tell him that he was not wanted. O'Conner, the foreman, was at his elbow as he said to Varney, with an earnestness which fairly transfigured him:

"If this eleven of yours is to come through clean, you must publicly apologize to that kid brother of mine. I am here to do my share. The rest is up to you. I stole your formations, disguised as a laborer on the ditch. It was a trick wasted, for we outplayed you, but I'm the Johnny. How about it, Mr. O'Conner?"

"A cute wan ye were," heartily laughed the foreman, now getting the drift of it. "Ye would loaf on your shovel and watch the boys at their sport until I yelled blue murder at ye."

"Shady business for a coach," said Varney, eying him sourly. "I'm not surprised, though."

"Cut all that out!" sharply exclaimed Joe. "Your crime was worse than mine. Speak for yourself, if you are a man."

"You bet I will be glad to apologize," retorted Varney, and his eyes glowed with feeling. "I'm ashamed of myself, Sedgwick, and I don't care who knows it. Publicly? In print, do you mean?"

"Yes. It's the only decent way. I propose to take a dose of that medicine to square matters for Bob. This miserable business is enough to ruin him unless it is denied and explained and retracted in every manner possible."

One of the coaches, who had hovered within ear-

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shot, stepped up to offer his hand to Sedgwick, the Yale outcast. The latter ignored this tribute of respect, laughed in his careless way, and turned his back to the coach, who exclaimed:

"You don't understand, old man. I realize what it means to you to have this statement of yours given to the newspapers. Bittinger College can't afford to keep you. It means the loss of your position there."

"Because I played the spy and am ready to own up to it? Sneaked into the Yale field in overalls? Right you are. Even my friends at Bittinger will have to draw the line, when the fact is advertised. I wired my resignation this morning."

Three of his old comrades were pounding him on the back at once. This was the spirit of unselfish devotion to duty, of self-sacrifice in another's behalf, which they fondly believed that Yale and her traditions stood for. Joe Sedgwick had come back to them. But he had been moved by no desire to redeem himself in the sight of his old companions. His one thought was for the boy of his own blood who had suffered terribly and thought himself eternally disgraced. Curtly thanking the group for their kindly interest in him, he walked rapidly from the field.

The younger Sedgwick was sauntering alone across the campus when Joe overtook him and said:

"The bad penny turns up again. I think you had better go back to the training-table to-night, kid. Varney is anxious to see you. You will find him almost human."

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"But, Joe, I am eternally queered," faltered Bob, unable to fathom this sudden twist of events. "Have you been trying to pull me out of a hole?"

"It is all done. Nothing more to it," cheerily replied the ne'er-do-well. "I am quite properly the goat, and have confessed as much. Please don't thank me. No bouquets. Now run along and be happy. A man can be a Sophomore only once."

The youngster was eager for information, but Joe laughed at the excited questions, and answered:

"Read it all in to-morrow's papers, son. Incidentally, mail will no longer reach me in care of Bittinger College. Address uncertain hereafter, but I am on my way."

"As a result of what you have done to clear me, Joe? I can guess that much. Won't you come home for Christmas? You know what this splendid stunt of yours will mean to the folks."

"Perhaps. At any rate, I'll be glad to get an invitation. If I fail to show up, just remember the biggest rule of the game, off the field as well as on, to follow the ball, and damn the odds."

Before Bob could detain him the prodigal son had walked away, jaunty and self-assured, and he was whistling softly: "Here's to Good Old Yale."

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HE weighed two hundred and thirty pounds, and both shoulders scraped an ordinary doorway when he passed through. As for height, he regarded a six-footer as more or less of a runt. At meeting him in a dark alley, Hercules himself might have halted to reach for that famous knotted club and clear for action. A tremendous youth was Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, and at first glimpse of him crossing the Yale campus the football captain had forgotten an important engagement with the dean and sprinted in pursuit of the prize. This interview was brief and unsatisfactory. Captain Fred Varney, a morose person of very few words, grasped the arm of the boyish colossus and exclaimed:

“Freshmen squad reported yesterday. Where were you? Three o’clock this afternoon. Be there, sure. What prep school? Did you play?”

Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan gazed down good-naturedly at the gaunt, almost insignificant figure of the greatest of end rushers, and answered, in a lazy, booming voice:

“The masters made me play at school. I didn’t like it, and I guess I can get along without any football in college, thank you.”

“Football doesn’t propose to get along without you,” growled Varney. “You look less clumsy than

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most of these great, big, overgrown infants. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

"Not a bit of it," grinned the Freshman. "There is some distinction to it when a man of my size refuses to be all bunged up on a football-field."

This extraordinary sentiment so annoyed Mr. Varney, whose temper was by no means pacific, that he retorted:

"Your class will disown you. I thought you were a man, you useless carload of blubber."

"You are keeping me from a recitation," said Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, still with the same vast amiability.

As he spoke he put out a hand. It no more than touched Varney on the chest, and he sat down so abruptly that his teeth clicked and he bit his tongue. While he picked himself up from the turf the mountainous Freshman moved away in a leisurely manner, nor glanced behind him. Amazed anger hampered the active captain, who knew not quite how to retaliate. He might tackle the offender by the knees and pull him down before punching him, or hastily search for a stepladder and climb within reach of the youngster's jaw; but either procedure would be undignified in full sight of the campus. For once the melancholy Varney grinned, accepted the joke as on him, and concluded to become better acquainted with this singular Freshman.

His parents had taken pains to fit him out with a name worthy of the family station, but his classmates

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promptly discarded it, and not as Llewellyn Chalmers was he known, but as "Sleepy Mike." This he accepted with philosophic affability, and the taunts inspired by his total lack of athletic spirit failed to jar him. In other respects he was no laggard. His mind was both acute and retentive, although he seldom seemed to employ it in study. It made the hard-working scholars indignant when, at the end of the term, Sleepy Jordan received a higher rating and was considered a safe bet for the intellectual comradeship of Phi Beta Kappa.

The Christmas vacation depopulated the campus, and among those westward bound were Captain Varney and the left guard of his eleven, Bob Sedgwick. They met in a train out of Chicago, and journeyed together, friends again after the misunderstanding during the football season. Varney was silent and gloomy as usual, but conversation was never expected of him; and Sedgwick, a sociable person, sought other diversion. Strolling into another car, he discovered the rosy giant who had scorned his duty to the gridiron. He sat alone and filled a seat, beaming, placid, no more than half-awake. As a Sophomore Sedgwick was presumed to disdain the company of this somnolent Jordan, but the barrier of college caste was brushed aside for the sake of sociability.

"Hello, little one!" was Bob's greeting. "How far does this railroad have to carry you, and what is the tariff per ton per mile?"

"I live in Denver," courteously replied the Fresh-

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man, getting the better of a yawn. “I lost six pounds this fall. Don’t I look it?”

“You have wasted away, I see, after examining you closely. What did it?”

“Dancing. I like it. I went out quite a lot, met some stunning New Haven girls, and was invited to some fine parties.”

Sedgwick looked incredulous, and seriously commented: “I did notice several girls on crutches out Whitney Avenue way, come to think of it. Do they make a noise when you step on their feet, or merely faint in their tracks?”

This served to arouse Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, who displayed signs of irritation as he retorted:

“Guy me as much as you like, but I am some dancer, and I wasn’t so unpopular with the ladies. Other couples usually give me plenty of room, and that helps.”

“Fred Varney is in the next car,” said Sedgwick, with a chuckle. “Why not have dinner with us? You have met him, I’m sure.”

“Yes, but he has no use for me,” replied the Freshman, his face a vivid red. “I wouldn’t know what to say to him.”

“That makes no difference. He is the original human clam. You needn’t feel obliged to waste language on him. He isn’t hostile, even if you did tip him off his pins with a gentle tap.”

“How nice of him!” smiled Sleepy Jordan. “I was awfully sorry. He doesn’t weigh very much and

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looks all shot to pieces. It's a mystery to me how he can be such a terror in football clothes. Of course, I shall feel flattered to dine with him."

Bob Sedgwick strolled into his own car and broke the news to Varney, who was regarding the landscape with glum indifference. He grunted and was gracious enough to remark:

"Not such a bad kid, though he ought to be booted all the way out to the Yale field and back again. They tell me there are no cobwebs in his attic. His professors think him a wonder. We can get on together without fighting, unless he playfully pushes me through a dining-car window, glass and all."

There was no discord at the table, and Varney even thawed a trifle. The mighty Freshman appealed to his sardonic sense of humor. He was so essentially a jovial boy, filled with tremendous enthusiasms in spite of his lazy demeanor, laughing at his own jokes, ludicrously in awe of Varney's opinions as coming from the greatest man in college. He was patterned after Bob Sedgwick's own heart, and these two were famously congenial. The evening passed without boredom, and it was agreed to meet for breakfast.

It was during this latter meal that the train made a long halt at an unimportant station, and the passengers became curious to know what should cause this delay to the Golden Gate Limited. The conductor was heard to say something about a washout and a damaged bridge. Bob Sedgwick and Varney went out to interview the station agent, leaving the Freshman to

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demand more breakfast in order to overtake an appetite which matched his size.

It was presently announced that the train could not proceed until afternoon. A sudden flood had dangerously weakened a span of a steel bridge, and traffic was blockaded while the construction crews made temporary repairs. There was a deal of ill-natured sputtering among the travellers, but young Sedgwick was undismayed. Wentworth, only twenty miles beyond, was his home town, and he proposed to waste no time in getting there.

“I can find somebody with an automobile to make the run in an hour,” he said to Varney. “Why don’t you come along? Have luncheon at my house, inspect the busy little burg, and jump on the train when it comes. My folks will be delighted.”

“Heaping coals of fire on my head, aren’t you?” replied the football captain, recalling the quarrel in which he had been wholly wrong. “Thanks. It will be stupid waiting all day at this jumping-off place.”

“Good enough! You go fetch our bags, and I will hustle the transportation, and telephone home that we are on our way.”

Sedgwick dashed into the highway and commandeered a farmer who was driving past in a noisy, mud-covered relic of an earlier age of gasoline. There was no haggling over terms, and the enterprising Sophomore galloped back to the train, meeting Varney, who said:

“Better bid the big Jordan child good-by. Lone-

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some for him, but perhaps he can amuse himself by eating all day."

"I'll ask him to join us, if you don't mind," suggested the warm-hearted Sedgwick. "It does seem unkind to desert him. I may have to buy the farmer a new set of springs for his car, but what's the odds?"

"Are you sure your family can feed him?" was Varney's gloomy comment. "I saw him devour six boiled eggs this morning, and he was merely warming up."

Sedgwick assumed the risk, and ran in to get Sleepy Mike, who wore, for once, a disconsolate air at seeing his Yale friends preparing to desert him. With gladness he accepted the invitation, and soon they were bumping over a frozen country road that was no more than lightly covered with snow. It was the holiday season, and their spirits were gay, Jordan rolling out song in what was meant to be a sonorous bass voice, his mighty shoulders heaving with innocent mirth whenever Sedgwick recalled another story. These two were in the mood for mischief, and the opportunity offered as the car rattled safely into the trim little city of Wentworth and sought a long street of uncommonly attractive houses.

A girl was about to cross in front of them, and she waited when the farmer tooted his warning horn. Now, a girl in furs on a wintry day, with a fine color, bright eyes, and a slim, straight figure is not apt to pass unperceived by three young men of impressionable years.

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"A pippin, believe me!" softly murmured Mr. Jordan.

"My cousin," shouted Robert Sedgwick, waving his hat. "Stop the machine! Hello, Kitty! Here, fellows, we'll get out and walk. It's only another block."

"I wish it was another mile, for the walking looks awfully good to me," observed the admiring Freshman.

They tumbled out forthwith and surrounded the fascinating cousin, who seemed not in the least dismayed. Bob presented his friends, indicating them with a careless sweep of the hand so that it was puzzling to guess which one was which.

"Miss Lombard, this is none other than Mr. Fred Varney, captain of the Yale varsity eleven; and here is a meek and lowly Freshman, officially designated as Mr. Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan. They are sojourning in our midst for a few hours only. Therefore we must hasten to give them a good time."

Miss Kitty surveyed the brace of strangers and instantly concluded that the rosy giant must, of course, be the famous athlete. She was a thoroughgoing Western girl to whom the colleges of the Atlantic seaboard were remote and uninteresting, barring the fact that Bob Sedgwick and his elder brother Joe had chosen to go to Yale. Her own home was in Iowa, and she visited the Sedgwicks once or twice a year. Newspaper portraits of Fred Varney had failed to engage her memory. Her mistake was not an unreasonable one.

Approvingly she eyed the magnificent proportions

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of Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, and swiftly pictured him to herself as sweeping through the Harvard and Princeton teams like the behemoth of Holy Writ, invincible, destructive. No more than a casual glance did she bestow upon Bob's other friend, the thin, stooping young man with the pale face and melancholy expression. She knew the type, the intellectual scholar who habitually studied too hard and despised athletics, and aspired to be a valedictorian even if it wrecked his health. Neglecting him for the moment, Miss Katharine Lombard addressed herself to the titanic Freshman, and her smile made an abject slave of him.

"You are to be here only a few hours, Mr. Varney? I am so sorry. That doesn't sound as if Bob were very hospitable. He really must persuade you to stay for the dance to-night, and——"

Mr. Jordan was about to profess his identity, but Sedgwick trod on his toe, and Varney glowered at him, making pantomimic gestures unseen by the girl. The same inspiration had occurred to both these graceless young men, the one moved by a blithesome vision of a lark, the other willing and anxious to remain obscurely in the background. Girls frightened the otherwise indomitable football demon, and he could never talk at all to the disturbing creatures. Jordan comprehended their wish that for the present he was not to correct Miss Kitty's blunder. They could laugh about it later, and meanwhile it fell in with his irresponsible humor to play the harmless masquerader.

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The fair cousin walked ahead with the bogus Yale hero, and Bob whispered to Varney as they followed:

“She is the busiest little tease you ever saw in your life. The way she used to guy me was cruel. This is my first chance to put one over on her.”

“Sure it’s all right?” was the anxious query. “You will confess the joke before we leave town? What about meeting your folks? It won’t do to fool them.”

“Leave it to me,” Bob easily assured him. “I’ll tip them off, and they will play it along at luncheon, especially dad. No doubt they will recognize you, but trust them to keep mum. Kitty is due to be paid in her own coin.”

Somewhat mollified, the conscientious Varney consented to the hoax sooner than to have a disagreement with his host. He was a poor hand at a joke himself, life being too serious a matter, but he had no desire to interfere with the enjoyment of others, and Sedgwick had accepted all responsibility. He sauntered along in his listless fashion, hands in his pockets, eyes downcast, finding nothing more to say. Miss Lombard, having catalogued him as a highbrow, surmised that he preferred company less frivolous, and wondered how her light-hearted Cousin Bob had happened to pick him out as a chum. Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan she found exceedingly easy to talk to. Football was the topic she naturally selected, and he was full of information that was modestly impersonal. Sedg-

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wick grinned, and Varney scowled at hearing his glib flow of misinformation, for it was notorious that he had never once troubled himself to watch the Yale team at practice.

"Please tell me, Mr. Varney," said Katharine, gazing up past the jutting shoulder of her companion, "do you honestly believe that your eleven could have beaten one of our crack Western universities—Michigan, for instance?"

"It would have been a great contest, in my opinion," replied the unabashed pretender. "Michigan might have outclassed us in end rushers and made winning gains in that way. Our left end was weak this year."

This being Fred Varney's position, in which for two seasons he had been ranked as the best in the country, he was a listener who almost lost his temper; but Sedgwick smothered a laugh and restrained him from violence. They turned in at a gate and crossed a lawn and Bob ran straight into his waiting mother's arms. The father, no less eager, but more sedate, came forward to welcome his younger son, and during the glad confusion the word was passed that the programme included having fun with Kitty. With ready wit and tact, the parents joined the conspiracy and greeted the brace of college friends as directed.

The situation held no complications until the party had finished luncheon, during which the counterfeit athlete had displayed an absorbed devotion to the piquant Katharine. When a youth of the bulk of

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Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan becomes a victim of sentimental emotion, he has the cubic capacity to contain a great deal of the same. He managed to draw Bob Sedgwick into a corner and huskily confide:

“About that dance, to-night, old man. Your cousin wants to know why I can’t stay over for it. I could just as well as not, you know, and beat it for Denver to-morrow. There is a hotel in town, I presume, and——”

“Nonsense! There is plenty of room in this house even for you—er—Captain Varney. Mother will be delighted. And I’ll try to persuade Fred—I mean Sleepy Jordan—to stick with us, although he is none too strong on the society game.”

The large Freshman displayed genuine distress as he rubbed his chin, fidgeted, and protested:

“Please don’t call me Varney again. We shall have to tell our real names. I can’t go to this dance under false colors and meet a lot of people. It would be carrying the merry jest entirely too far, and—and it’s rough on Miss Lombard.”

“Ah, I see,” politely replied Sedgwick, with a wicked little smile. “You would rather have her know you as your true self. I respect your honorable scruples, but——”

“But what?” was the anxious query, for the Freshman caught a hint of trouble.

“Supposing Fred Varney objects to giving the joke away. Here he comes. Let’s consult him.”

The taciturn football-player had joined Miss Kitty

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of his own free will, and appeared to enjoy the privilege. To his waiting friends he announced, with unwonted animation:

"Miss Lombard suggested going to the dance to-night, and I have a notion of staying over for it."

"Bully for you!" cried Bob. "It will make a distinct hit. You will drop the disguise, of course."

"Not on your life!" was Varney's emphatic rejoinder, at which the Freshman opened his eyes very wide. "Here is where I expect to enjoy myself for once, and dodge all the everlasting chatter about football."

"But I can't stand for that, really," exclaimed Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, obviously woebegone. "It will never do, Mr. Varney. Miss Lombard would never forgive me, and I wish very much to keep her respect."

"Your best scheme is to write and explain it to her at long range," advised Sedgwick. "Tell her you were coerced. You are to attend the dance as the captain of the Yale eleven, understand?"

"What if I do as I please?" the Freshman stubbornly ventured.

"I will refuse to back you up," Varney put in. "Sedgwick's mother and father have another engagement for the evening. Nobody else is wise to the joke. If Bob and I insist that you are the real thing and are denying it because of your well-known modesty, then where do you get off?"

"Confound it, you are a heartless pair of brutes! I believe you enjoy putting me in a hole," rumbled

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the victim. "May I have your permission to own up to Miss Lombard after the dance?"

"Certainly," Varney agreed. "All I want is a chance for a pleasant evening and nobody to pester me."

The Freshman could not be downhearted for long, and it was his blissful fortune to walk to the club in the evening with Miss Kitty and engage no fewer than four dances with her. Two others she kindly reserved for that shy and inconspicuous scholar, Fred Varney, who sat and gazed at her most of the time. For the mighty yet nimble-footed Freshman, the comedy suddenly assumed a serious aspect when he was introduced to a muscular, enthusiastic young man named Macgregor, who exclaimed, as they shook hands:

"I am the captain of the Wentworth Athletic Association team, and we play our annual game with the eleven from Statesville to-morrow—the rival city across the river. Bob Sedgwick has agreed to play guard for us, and he thinks you can be persuaded to join our rush-line for the fun of the thing. You can run through the signals with us in the morning."

"I wish I could, but—but I have to leave town," stammered the hapless giant, as Sedgwick and Varney sauntered up. They uttered no threats, but their stern faces expressed a direful purpose. Sleepy Jordan gulped and looked at them appealingly. It was obvious that they intended to throw him to the lions. This misguided Macgregor person had made it more difficult than ever to declare himself an impostor.

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"Certainly he will play on your team, Mac," smoothly asserted Sedgwick. "He would rather line up with that scrappy outfit of yours than to eat a square meal. I'll guarantee that he shows up in his regular position."

At his wits' end, the victim called Varney aside to beg for mercy, but the latter cruelly declared:

"This is too good. I'd be ashamed to spoil it. Go the route, you poor boob, or I'll tell this story all over New Haven."

"But it means murder," sighed Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan. "I am in no condition to play football, and I've forgotten all I ever knew about the infernal game."

"Those lads play for blood, so Bob tells me. The two towns hate each other like poison. In comparison a Yale-Harvard game is as mild as sewing shirts for soldiers. There is no escape for you, kid. Miss Lombard will be there to cheer you."

The Freshman groaned, and realized that he was in the hands of the enemy. Fred Varney had found a chance to square accounts for that interview on the campus, when he had sat down so abruptly. It would be impossible to flee the town by night, for doubtless these two unfeeling conspirators would take turns guarding the hapless Freshman. He was trapped, the alternative of denying to the odious Macgregor that he was the famous Yale athlete seeming impossible. He moved heavily away to claim a dance with Kitty Lombard, who was all elation at the news that he had consented to display his prowess on the morrow. His

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laugh was hollow, his manner absent, and his course around the floor so reckless that Bob suggested equipping him with fenders and a gong.

“He refused to go out to the Yale field when I asked him,” murmured Fred Varney. “He jeered at football. This is poetic justice. It is to grin!”

It was Sedgwick, up bright and early next morning, who rummaged through the lockers in the club-house basement and purloined the largest pair of football breeches, which he conveyed to a tailor with instructions to make them at least a yard larger all round, and do the job in a hurry. He met his friends at breakfast, and was grieved to note that the doomed Freshman no more than pecked at his food, and behaved like a man in a trance.

“He is usually like that just before a game,” Varney informed Kitty Lombard. “He takes it so seriously. Football is a sort of religion with him.”

“It seems rather foolish to you, no doubt,” she replied. “You are such a contrast, but I am sure your scholarly ambitions are more worth while.”

It was an informal holiday in Wentworth, which stood ready to shout for Macgregor’s team, and to bet Statesville to a standstill. Most of the stores were closed at noon, and hundreds of people motored in from the surrounding country. The scene suggested a college contest when the rival elevens scampered across the open field and began to punt the ball about in preliminary practice. The chief sensation was the presence of the huge Wentworth right guard in a tight

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blue jersey, and the biggest moleskin breeches ever beheld. The tidings that the Yale captain had been induced to play for the love of the game aroused jealous indignation among the Statesville partisans, and they loudly urged their champions to send him back East on a stretcher.

Fred Varney was with Katharine Lombard, and she found him slightly distraught, a mood which she mistook for lack of interest in a pastime so boisterous and lowbrowed. He was really reflecting that the joke had taken a turn rather unfair to Macgregor and his comrades. To foist the useless Sleepy Jordan on them as a real football player seemed hardly sportsmanlike, a feature of the situation which had not occurred to Varney until now. He felt uncomfortable, and silently hoped that Wentworth might win.

To Varney's amazement, the "impossible Freshman sailed in to show the crowd that he was indeed a terrible right guard from Yale. His frame of mind was that of sheer desperation, for one thing, and he swore that he should not be made ridiculous in the sight of Kitty Lombard. As another favoring factor, the Statesville team was more or less afraid of his size and reputation, and he affected their nerves. To see him thrashing about in the rush line, or falling on top of an opponent was a spectacle to make a strong man tremble for his own life. And as he plunged to and fro, he bellowed ferociously, exhorting his mates and jeering the rivals. Bob Sedgwick, playing his own position with alert efficiency, tried to restrain this

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whale among the minnows, advising him, after a scrimmage:

“You are surely throwing a scare into them, even if you do get every signal wrong. But for goodness’ sake slow up and save your wind.”

“Darned if I’ll let you and Varney make a monkey of me,” panted the plucky pretender. “I smeared the Statesville centre rush in the eye because he kicked my shins. And I’m liable to smear you if you laugh at me.”

The Wentworth line was weak, and Macgregor was depending on his two Yale recruits for most of the hard work. For a time the defense held firm, but Sleepy Jordan could not stand the pace. He staggered instead of trotting into position. His complexion turned from red to purple. He puffed like an engine exhaust. His exertions, no longer prodigious, became so enfeebled that the foemen ceased to fear him. Macgregor was too courteous to suggest that a substitute relieve him, even when the tide of battle surged against the Wentworth eleven. They had expected such tremendous deeds of the New Haven hero that his collapse dismayed and disorganized them. Statesville seized the opportunity and smashed down the field for a touch-down.

Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan was no longer an adversary. He was merely an obstacle to be hauled to one side or crawled over. The spirit was still willing, but the flesh was wofully weak. Kitty Lombard was sadly perplexed. Ardentloyal, it was a real afflic-

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tion to see defeat so imminent. At her side sat Fred Varney, pale, gloomy, his shoulders hunched over, displaying no emotion. Kitty was vexed with him. He was a poor shrimp of a bookworm, thought she, to be so indifferent when his own friends were suffering disaster.

"Aren't you the least little bit interested and sorry?" she cried impatiently, wringing her hands. "Oh, there they go again, right through our centre and straight down the field! What can be the matter with Captain Varney? Is it lack of training?"

"Mostly. He ought to have been kept out of the game," answered her callous companion. "You are right, Miss Lombard; perhaps I ought to show more interest. If you will excuse me, I'll see you later."

He raised his hat and walked in the direction of the small club-house where the players changed their clothes. Kitty assumed that he had taken offense at her attitude, and was deliberately leaving the field before the game was over. She put him out of her mind and decided to scold Bob for bringing him home at all. A few minutes later a lean, loose-jointed young man came trotting to the side-line. He had hastily donned such old clothes as he could lay hands on, and they were patched and torn and muddied. Grim was his face, his sombre eyes aglow, his manner as keen as it had been indifferent hitherto. He suggested a thoroughbred hound trailing a warm scent.

He beckoned the weary Macgregor, who stared with blank incredulity, gesticulated, called Bob Sedgwick

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over by way of confirmation, and then grinned ecstatically. Varney said something more, and Macgregor called one of his half-backs out of the game. An end rush by training, the lank Yale captain preferred to make his stand behind the line in this crisis. Sleepy Jordan comprehended what was about to occur, and yelled for joy, unselfishly forgetting his own sorry plight and exposure. Varney waved him back into the game, gruffly explaining:

“You have done your level best, kid. Stay with it, and get your second wind. You deserve to be in at the finish.”

Macgregor summoned his men, who stood in a group surrounding the genuine Varney. He wasted no time in apologies for deceiving them, but told them what to do, biting off the words, sure of himself, a fit commander for a forlorn hope. They listened respectfully, his grim spirit infusing them with confidence renewed. The insignificance of his appearance was overlooked. They felt compelled to believe that he was the man for the emergency.

The battered players returned to the fray in a dangerous mood, and the opponents were fairly taken by surprise. They could not understand the change of tactics and the new leadership. It was Wentworth's ball in the middle of the field, and Varney took it on a short pass, with no more than a pretense of interference to help him get under way. Poor Jordan failed to block his man but Varney brushed past him, wriggled through the slight gap, tore himself free

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from the hands that clutched him, stumbled, regained his feet, broke clear, and ran ten yards before two backs pulled him down.

He was up like a flash, ready for the next assault, and again he went straight at the line. The ragged offensive was of little aid, and he tore, head down, into the thick of the Statesville team, but managed to twist and slide and shove for another gain. Tireless, refusing to spare himself, he was up and at it again, this time to circle one end and cross the field in a long slant before he was stopped out of bounds. By now he had taken the measure of his opponents, and he growled a few words at Bob Sedgwick. The agile guard nodded, and at the next play ran from his position as the ball was passed and joined the fleet-footed Varney as he sped for the other end of the line. Down the field they raced, side by side, the brawny Sedgwick bowling over one tackler after another, shielding his comrade from attack in a beautiful exhibition of teamwork, while the pursuit pounded vainly behind them. Ahead was clear sailing, but the sprinter of the Statesville team could do the hundred in even time, and Sedgwick was unable to ward him off as he came flying up from the rear. A reckless dive, a grip that caught Varney's ankle and failed to hold, and the Yale captain sprawled his length. Sedgwick grasped his arm and towed him the last few yards across the goal-line for the touch-down that tied the score.

As Varney limped back and stood waiting for the try at goal, Katharine Lombard recognized the trans-

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formed bookworm, but was unable to credit her eyesight. There was no mistaking his face and figure, and she was conscious of a dizzy, bewildered sensation. The world had turned topsyturvy for the afternoon. Kitty was by no means a stupid girl, however, and after a little she read the answer to the riddle and most contritely said to herself:

“And I was absolutely horrid to him. I can never, never meet him again. It is all Bob Sedgwick’s fault, and he will have to beg on his bended knees before I forgive him.”

She lamented no more, for the game was on, and, leaning forward, breathless, with sparkling eyes, she watched Macgregor’s doughty clansmen rally about Fred Varney for the decisive effort. Statesville took the ball and smashed ahead for short advances, which were stopped by tackling fierce and reckless. A fumble, the ball was visible for an instant as it bounded out of a confused mass of players, and Varney had scooped it up on the run. The distance to the enemy’s goal was no more than twenty yards.

Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, groggy, but still going through the motions, had charged forward because nobody thought it worth the trouble to stop him. His ponderous momentum carried him beyond the scrimmage toward the Statesville goal, and he halted to discover what had happened. Before he could turn and rejoin his comrades, Fred Varney came weaving and doubling through the broken field, the ball tucked under one arm.

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The big Freshman uttered a roar and galloped madly on ahead of Varney in a frantic effort to clear the path. He had seen Bob Sedgwick act as a convoy and tried to imitate him, but his good intentions were disastrous. He managed to place himself squarely in the way of Varney, who banged into him head on, and caromed off as if he had collided with a brick wall. Both men fell down. The Statesville quarter-back dived at Varney and fairly pinned him to turf, but the ball popped out of the Yale man's arms and rolled straight at the prostrate Jordan. Bob Sedgwick groaned, thinking it an accident. He had never before known Varney to lose the ball.

Now the bungling Freshman was wholly disregarded and unmolested, and as he beheld the errant ball coming in his direction he sprawled toward it and grasped the slippery leather in his mighty palms. Then, hugging it to his breast, he rolled over and over toward the goal, perhaps a dozen feet distant. Two Statesville players toppled upon him, but he kept on rolling. It was like trying to check the progress of a steam road-machine. Now he uprose upon his knees and continued his slow but irresistible march. Wonderful to behold, he even staggered to his feet and the foemen seemed to be draped all over him, yet he continued to move.

Six feet from the line he toppled forward and measured his length, which was enough and to spare. His fellow warriors danced for joy and pried loose the numerous opponents who had tried in vain to put the

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brakes on Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan. He was too far gone for speech, but his countenance was as jocund as a harvest-moon. Macgregor mopped him with a dripping sponge, while Bob Sedgwick was saying to Varney:

"Great luck! Now everybody is happy. But how the deuce did you happen to let the ball bounce out of your arms?"

"Don't say a word to Jordan, but I wanted him to make that touch-down. I might have carried it over myself on the next try, but——"

"But you preferred to let him have it?" said Bob. "Fine work! Mighty thoughtful of you. The kid tried to make good, and I admire his sand. And we did put over a pretty bum joke on him to-day."

The Freshman recovered sufficiently to walk from the field and receive the ovation that was due him as one of the heroes. No more was he a sorry jest, a butt for ridicule, and this was the greatest day of his life, for he had won the game for Wentworth and for the peerless Kitty Lombard. He gave all the credit to his Yale comrades twain, but Varney slapped him between the shoulders and exclaimed:

"The laugh is on us, my son, for assuming that you knew no football. What about coming out to the Yale field next year?"

"You can't keep me away," boomed Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, intoxicated by the heady draught of success.

"Is there any use of trying to explain it to Miss

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Lombard?" remarked Varney, with a gravely worried air.

"Try it and see," suggested Bob. "It is a safe bet that she feels none too easy in her own mind."

"Let me be the goat," Jordan cheerfully volunteered. "That is what Freshmen are made for."

Miss Katharine had prepared herself for the interview, and her poise was perfect as she congratulated the trio and sweetly exclaimed:

"It would have spoiled it if I had told you that I really did know which was which when Bob introduced you."

They looked at each other rather blankly, and Bob murmured an opinion to the effect that keeping up with Kitty required a fellow who was quick on his feet. They had no desire to argue the matter with her, and Fred Varney, who appeared like one reprieved, boldly declared:

"If there is to be another dance during the holidays, I shouldn't mind having an invitation. I live only a thousand miles from here. No trouble at all to run over to Wentworth."

"I intend to commute between here and Denver," said the Freshman, going him one better.

"It sounds to me, Kitty," wisely observed her cousin Robert, "as though we might call it the most active football season that ever struck our town."

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THAT stoical Yale athlete, Fred Varney, made few friends in college. He lived a life silent and apart, which seemed to concern itself with his fellows only when he flamed in a white heat of action on the football-field. Contrasts sometimes act like a magnet to draw men together, and it amused the campus when Varney was seen, rather frequently, in the company of the flightiest, most talkative youth of the junior class, Gordon Pilcher by name. He was more commonly known as "Windy Gus," and it was seriously alleged that his conversation had been known to scatter the autumn leaves from the turf in front of his dormitory. His generous good nature made him popular, and he was in no sense a braggart. Life interested him tremendously, and he thought out loud.

It became a habit of his to grasp Varney's arm when they met, tow him along and conduct a monologue with the greatest gusto and animation, the melancholy football captain unable to interject more than a nod or an occasional word. Jerry Altemus, as an interested spectator, was moved to inquire of the effervescent Gordon Pilcher:

"What is the secret of your charm? Do you spiel language into his suffering ear until he is in a dazed, helpless condition, unable to escape? The rest of us

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sort of play up to Varney's disposition—wait him out and give him a chance to utter his thoughts. He is worth listening to when he does uncork, but with you his only hope is the deaf-and-dumb alphabet. And yet he seems to like your chatter, Gus."

"All wrong, Jerry, you are all wrong," was the smiling reply. "Fred and I discuss the darndest lot of things—current events; politics; why girls marry the wrong men; what's the matter with Yale football; is a college education worth while; where the deuce do Harvard men get their accent; should compulsory chapel be abolished; and is an eight-cylinder car really any better than a good six? You fellows don't know Varney. He's mighty well informed, let me tell you."

"He agrees with you to save trouble, and you hear yourself run on, and assume it's a dialogue," was the comment of young Mr. Altemus. "Poor old Varney! He looks overtrained. And I heard him coughing yesterday. That comes from standing in a draught, no doubt."

"Meaning me?" cheerily observed Pilcher. "You are the sad little josher, aren't you? On the level, Fred Varney has promised to spend part of the summer vacation with me, at our place on Long Island. Does that sound as if I bored him to death?"

"He's an awfully queer chap, eccentric, you know," said Jerry, shaking his head; "but I never knew him to do anything quite so odd as that. It makes me fear you have driven him daffy already."

"Well, anyhow, I expect to give him a good time,"

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exclaimed Gus, "and maybe I can sweeten him up. He gets too much of this fake cynicism and imitation weary-man-of-the-world stuff that you hand out."

"A warm one, Gus. You hurt my feelings," was Jerry's farewell.

"Pooh! You think too much of yourself to care if I call you names," was the retort. "And you insult me every time we meet. See you later."

When college closed in June, Fred Varney waited for the Harvard boat-race, and then returned to New Haven for a night to help speed the departure of his helter-skelter host, Gordon Pilcher, who had made no preparations whatever. His rooms were in frightful confusion, trunk not yet packed, and Varney took command in his gruff, methodical manner. Suddenly Pilcher fished a telegram from his pocket, waved it carelessly, and explained:

"Found this to-night. I wired home yesterday that I was bringing you, Fred—forgot to mention it in my letters. Not that it makes a bit of difference, but my dad shoots back word that a bunch of decorators are camped in the house, doing it over from cellar to garret—the blackguards agreed to finish a month ago—my dad is a perfectly bully old sport, but peculiar, don't you know—always tearing the house to pieces at short notice. The folks are starting off on a motor tour till the smoke clears——"

"Don't mind me. It's all off," interrupted Varney. "Do they want you to join them?"

"Not a bit of it, my dear boy. You and I will live

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at the Green Valley Country Club. It is only two miles from our place; nice crowd of men, and lots going on, or you can be as quiet as you like. I'll wire to reserve rooms."

Varney demurred, but it was explained to him that the Pilcher family used the club as a sort of emergency refuge, and frequently stayed there or found quarters for their guests when the house was crowded. This problem solved, the two young men went to New York, and next day arrived in that favored region of Long Island where people dwell on estates instead of farms, and servants are oftener seen in livery than in overalls. The country club was a low-roofed, rambling structure, half-timbered in the old English style.

Fred Varney soon discovered that the members displayed a thoroughly American interest in the sport of baseball. Several of the younger set had been heroes of the college diamond, and their zest was unabated. They boasted of the prowess of the club nine in previous summers, and were planning a campaign even more brilliant.

"Too bad your specialty is football," said Pilcher, as they strolled across the lawn. "You would enjoy playing with these chaps for the fun of the thing."

"I used to play, Gus. I held down second base for Andover two years, but cut it out at Yale. My health won't stand hard training the whole year through."

"On the Andover nine? What do you know about that?" cried the enthusiastic friend. "You're one of these natural athletes, eh? Wait till I tell the John-

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nies in the club-house. They'll throw you into a uniform to-morrow morning. The team is weak at second, they tell me. Did you swat the pill good and plenty? I'll just bet you did."

"I didn't fan out every time at bat," modestly observed Varney. "I am rusty, of course, but I think I'd like to try a few innings. Golf is not my long suit, and I'm afraid of a horse."

Pilcher dragged him back to the piazza to meet the captain of the nine, a sunburned, affable young man who had been a famous pitcher at Princeton.

"Here, Slocum, this is the great Fred Varney, the lad who twisted the tail of the Tiger last November. But there's no hard feeling, is there? He is some baseball player, too, and I've persuaded him to help out that punk team of yours for a few weeks."

Mr. Slocum warmly expressed his gratitude and invited Varney to join the practice next morning. Secretly Windy Gus felt a certain relief. It had been in the nature of a feat to lure the unsociable Varney for a visit, besides "putting one over on Jerry Altemus," but, once caught, the guest was not the easiest person in the world to entertain. He was sure to take this baseball proposition seriously, however, as he did everything else, and the amiable host would be free to frivol with the girls and golf to his heart's content.

Once in baseball clothes and spiked shoes, a wad of gum in his cheek, the feel of a mitt on his hand, Varney had no time for anything else. The old skill came back. He handled himself with that air of slouching deliberation which was so deceptive on the

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football-field, and the runner who tried to steal second on him was apt to be surprised. Always cool, calculating, unruffled, he steadied the nine and gave it some of his own fighting spirit. In the club-house he talked nothing but baseball, speaking briefly, with long intervals of silence, but whatever he said was received with the most respectful attention.

When at bat, his morose, harsh features, set in an expression of inflexible determination, shook the nerve of the average amateur pitcher. He could not be tempted to swing at a wild one, but bided his time and picked a ball to his liking, slamming it as viciously as he tackled an opposing half-back. In a few days it was perceived that the Green Valley Country Club nine had been strengthened fifty per cent by the presence of this earnest young man from Yale.

Windy Gus became absorbed in his own diversions. Everybody was happy, said he, so what was the difference? For once he found himself unable to talk unchecked, for when he and Varney met at meals, the athlete was actually loquacious and growled his ideas of "inside play" and the flaws in his team until Pilcher was afraid to interrupt him.

They had been at the club a fortnight when Varney received a letter from Jerry Altemus which caused him a certain uneasiness. It read, in part:

. . . I saw your name in a paper yesterday, as playing with the Green Valley Club outfit. Professor Jim Haworth is visiting some people near us. As the faculty member of the Yale Athletic Advisory Board, he is the only man in the world who

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understands all the rules about summer baseball. Do you get me? I mentioned you in a casual way, and he suggested that I drop you a line just as a matter of precaution. It surely does sound like butting in, for me to advise as wise a guy as you, but Haworth says these eligibility restrictions are a Chinese puzzle, and you can't play too safe.

You are visiting Gus Pilcher, of course, but it's wise to make sure that every other man on the team is an eighteen-carat amateur so you won't be contaminated. And, for Heaven's sake, don't accept even a drink or a cigar from the Green Valley Country Club as such, or some snooping scout from another college will try to put the professional brand on you. I am just handing it to you as Haworth suggested. I imagine he thinks you may have been so wrapped up in football that perhaps you failed to keep up with all this nonsense about so-called summer baseball. Regards to Gus. Tell him to change the needle oftener if his voice shows signs of wear. . . .

Fred Varney smiled at this mark of Jerry's affectionate solicitude, and considered the warning all moonshine. He was not playing baseball for his board and lodging, and he felt convinced that the status of his comrades of the club team was beyond reproach. None of them had been recruited from elsewhere. They were either genuine summer residents in the club-house, or lived within motoring distance. A game was to be played that afternoon, and he decided to show the letter to Pilcher after dinner, when there would be leisure to discuss it.

When Varney tried to find his friend, the irresponsible Gus was nowhere to be discovered. His room was even more disorderly than usual, and clothing was

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strewn about as if there had been a hasty choice and a swift exit. Somewhat puzzled, Varney went downstairs and opened his mail-box. In it was a note, addressed with spluttering haste. The contents indicated that Mr. Gordon Pilcher was a creature of impulse. He explained as follows:

DEAR OLD FRED:

You will understand, I'm sure. Billy Featherstone called me up from New York just after you went to the game. He is sailing for Africa to-morrow to shoot lions and things, and the pal who was expected to go with him has had to call it off. Billy insisted that I go along as first substitute. I didn't tell you, but my report from the dean's office came yesterday, term stand and examination ratings, and I fail to connect. Flunked! Dropped from the class. What's the use of going back to college? This African stunt will be a liberal education, what?

I may seem rude, but you can have a good time without me. Stay as long as you like. In a great rush, with more apologies.

The procedure seemed so characteristic that Varney was not really amazed. He was profoundly sorry that the college career of Windy Gus should have been cut short by ruthless edict of the dean's office. The Pilcher family, from father to son, was a bit difficult to keep up with. With a trace of peevishness, Varney said to himself:

"I hope a lion chews him, not too deep, but enough to tame him just a few."

The deserted athlete drifted into the café and ordered a lemonade, which he gloomily absorbed through

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a straw while considering the situation. He would have to pack up and leave the club, of course, and cut short his enjoyable baseball experience. It was out of the question for him to remain and charge his living expenses to a host whom he was no longer visiting. Any fellow with sense could see that, but what could you expect of Windy Gus? Calling his absent friend several hard names, Varney went to his room.

When changing into his baseball uniform, early in the afternoon, he had left on a bureau his purse containing seventy dollars in bills. The sensational exodus of Gordon Pilcher had caused him to forget to put the purse in his pocket during a later trip upstairs. Now he remembered it, but the money could not be found. The purse lay open and empty where he had left it. This was disturbing, on top of the other jarring event, and, in a sore mood, Varney hurried to the office to report his loss.

The manager of the club-house, a suave, dapper person, appeared to have troubles of his own. He was engaged in excited discussion with two members of his staff, and others hovered within ear-shot. Varney waited with no great patience, and, at length, broke into the agitated conference.

"I've been touched—seventy dollars' worth. How about it? My room was unlocked, of course. It was done some time this afternoon."

The manager rubbed his hands together, and his pink features were profoundly distressed as he replied:

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"I am very sorry to say, Mr. Varney, that you are not the only victim. Our chief clerk is missing, a young man who was most highly recommended. He has left his accounts in frightful shape. In fact, he destroyed some of the books and vouchers, or took them with him in order to cover up his thefts from the office. He made a final clean-up, I presume, and robbed your room. The police have been notified."

"I guess I may as well kiss my seventy dollars good-by," said Varney.

"By no means!" cried the manager; adding in tones more subdued: "It will be a favor if you will say nothing about the matter in the club. You will be reimbursed at once. This is not a hotel, you understand. The club is responsible for the safety and comfort of its guests."

Varney thought this most courteous, and was about to voice his thanks, when he bethought himself of that warning letter from Jerry Altemus. Accept seventy dollars in cash from the Green Valley Country Club, and have the amount duly entered as paid to him? Not on your life, reflected the canny Varney. After he had played baseball for two weeks in a club uniform? To the manager he briefly responded:

"Thanks, but the loss was due to my own carelessness. You needn't trouble to make it good. Another thing, which is more important, I shall be leaving for New York to-night. I have been here as the personal guest of Mr. Gordon Pilcher. That is on record, I suppose. I mean you have memoranda to that effect?"

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Confusion made the manager pinker than before as he answered, in a highly nervous manner:

"Mr. Pilcher signed the club checks, no doubt, and the items should be entered up, but this confounded rascal of a clerk has balled things up so frightfully—really, Mr. Varney, I am afraid I can't straighten out Mr. Pilcher's account at present. It makes no great difference, does it? To save annoyance, the club will assume this particular account and charge it off to profit and loss."

"My living expenses for two weeks will be paid by the Green Valley Country Club?" savagely demanded Mr. Frederick Varney, who looked as if he were about to climb over the desk and commit an assault. "Nothing doing. The bill has got to be charged to Mr. Pilcher's account somehow."

There was no apparent reason why this guest should become so irate, and the manager, who was in an unhappy frame of mind, and easily upset, showed signs of temper as he said:

"I see no occasion for a row, Mr. Varney. I will take the matter up with Mr. Pilcher as soon as he returns."

"Then you have nothing to prove that he is responsible for my stay at the club?"

"Merely your own word, Mr. Varney. You were put up by Mr. Pilcher, who said something about charging your account to him just before he went away to-day. I took this to mean hereafter, during his absence."

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"This is certainly a lovely kettle of fish," murmured the athlete, turning away with a shrug. "Well, never mind. I can't make this fat-headed club manager understand. He thinks I'm worrying about the high cost of living."

Retreating to the billiard-room, he sat hunched up in a leather-cushioned corner and reviewed the complications which seemed to beset his pure and undefiled status as an amateur and a Yale football player. The rules were all rot, but there was no getting around them. The slightest slip and some lowbrowed sleuth from a rival college might dig up the evidence to disbar him from all connection with athletics at New Haven. The fact that his name had appeared in the newspapers as playing with this country-club nine during the summer vacation was enough to attract attention.

The only proof to clear him of all doubt consisted of Windy Gus Pilcher, who had started hell-bent for Africa, without even leaving an address or the name of the steamer. There were no club vouchers to attest Varney's innocence by means of the signature of young Mr. Pilcher. And the ass of a manager would no doubt inform any inquirer that Mr. Varney had been a guest of the club, in order to avoid explanations.

"I can afford to take no chances with this summer-baseball stuff," soliloquized the victim of circumstances. "My game is to find the parents of Windy Gus, who are surely his legal and lawful representatives, and

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make them accept enough money to cover this little visit, and give me a receipt, duly sworn and witnessed. That blocks any attempt to put it up to the club."

He straightway got his things together, cashed a personal check for ready funds, and hired a man to drive him to the Pilcher estate, in search of information. The housekeeper, a woman of haughty presence, was inclined to view the young man with suspicion. Mr. Pilcher, senior, had told her where to forward telegrams and personal letters during his motor tour, but had said nothing about sending strange persons on his trail. Was it a business matter? Then Mr. Varney should interview the superintendent of the estate, or Mr. Pilcher's secretary at his office in New York. It was all very well for Mr. Varney to say that he was an intimate friend of Mr. Gordon Pilcher, but, for her part, she had never seen them together, and the family had been imposed upon more than once.

Mr. Varney said nothing, but eyed her with a scrutiny so cold and unfaltering that she rang for the butler, feeling the need of his moral support. To this august personage the visitor spoke briefly:

"Beat it to the 'phone, James, and ask the Country Club if I have been staying there for two weeks with young Mr. Pilcher. Give name and personal description. Step along."

The butler drew himself to his full height, uttered an objection, and cut it quite short when Varney moved a trifle closer to him and scowled. Meek was

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the demeanor of James when he returned from the hall and announced:

"It is just as you say, sir. Under the circumstances I should advise Mrs. Botsford to inform you of the probable whereabouts of Mr. Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher and party."

The housekeeper thawed considerably and imparted that the route of the tourists included the Berkshires, the White Mountains, Montreal, and the New England coast. Varney jotted down the names of several hotels and the dates appended, and promptly withdrew, observing, as he fled:

"A real touch of high life, that. It was a temptation to punch James, just once for luck. Perhaps I ought to wait until these Pilcher people come home, but they may decide to chase out to the Rocky Mountains by way of Florida and the Great Lakes. It is a speedy family."

It was a week later when he intercepted the motor pilgrimage at Bar Harbor. The first glimpse of Mr. Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher suggested that he might have to be handled with care. He was a slender, gray-haired man, very erect, with a military air almost truculent. The chauffeur had committed some trifling fault, and his employer was rebuking him with a cutting sarcasm, and an indifference to his feelings that made the poor fellow flush and wince. Varney felt indignant, but his singular errand required tact, and he tried to forget his dislike of this domineering gentleman.

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Mr. Pilcher was condescendingly gracious when the young man introduced himself, and they drew their chairs to a window of the lounging-room.

"But I thought you and Gordon were at the Green Valley Club together," said he.

"Gus—I mean Gordon—went to Africa last week to shoot lions," was the reply. "Didn't you know that?"

"He forgot to mention it," exclaimed the parent, in such an easy voice that Varney grinned. He had expected a tremendous explosion. Mr. Pilcher continued by way of explanation: "We go our own several gaits. I am very strongly opposed to hampering individual expression. Besides, Gordon is twenty-one, and has money of his own, left him by his grandmother; quite a pot of it. But how can he return from Africa in time for the autumn term of college?"

"He has been canned," said Varney, seeing no reason why the truth should be evaded. "The faculty found fault with his scholarship, and it is all over with poor Windy—pardon me—with Gordon."

The explosion had been merely deferred. It went off with a resounding bang, and was aimed, not at the head of the luckless Gordon, but at the Yale faculty, which dared to discipline a Pilcher.

"Dismissed him, do you mean to tell me?" cried the impetuous gentleman, eyes blazing, military mustache bristling, cane swishing through the air. "The boy has a brilliant mind, I tell you, and most uncommon powers of expression. He is a typical Pilcher.

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He inherits these qualities. If Yale fails to appreciate him, so much the worse for Yale. I shall advise him to go to Harvard. First, however, I intend to interview these autocrats at New Haven, personally."

"Yes, sir," said Varney, recalling certain interviews of his own with the dean, whose suave courtesy was the iron hand in the velvet glove. "I wish you luck, Mr. Pilcher. Indeed, Gordon is right there with the power of expression, at least forty horse-power. I came to see you on an errand which needs some explaining. Gordon stepped out for Africa so suddenly that he left me rather up a tree. You see, he asked me down to visit him, but I have nothing to show for it that this was the arrangement, and I was unable to straighten it out with the manager of the Country Club, and——"

Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher bounced from his chair, and, at this fancied provocation, he fairly detonated. Poor Varney was the target. The sire of Gordon had suddenly conceived a violent dislike for Yale University and all men affiliated therewith.

"And so you were afraid to trust my son to settle this miserable little club account at some future time?" he ejaculated. "Followed me clear to Bar Harbor to collect from me? Well, you are a thrifty youth. You ought to get on."

Varney kept his temper, and was more amused than hurt. It was a Pilcher trait to jump in and seize the wrong end of an argument through inability to sit still and hear the other fellow out.

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"The shoe is on the other foot," patiently resumed the man from Yale. "I came all the way up here to ask you to take some of my money—two weeks' board and incidentals at the club, and give me a written receipt for it. You see, sir, I am the captain of the Yale eleven, and the eligibility rules are so infernally fussy that——"

Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher endeavored to restrain himself, but this extraordinary young bouncer was goading him beyond endurance.

"My son's guest, and you insist on paying board, as you call it, to his father?" was the fiery reply. "You were invited to spend several weeks under my own roof, at my estate of Broad Acres. Would you have asked me to render a bill every Saturday night, and at what rate per day would you reckon it? Because my house was in disorder, my son took you to his club. Why, of all the incredible insults to hospitality! What ails you? What possible connection can this have with Yale football? I know nothing whatever about frenzied college athletics. They bore me. Eligibility rules, did you say? I am aware of only one code that concerns the eligibility of a gentleman."

This was going strong, and Varney flinched, but he was determined to dodge a quarrel. Father and son were delightfully preposterous.

"Can't you let it go as a whim of mine, and humor me, Mr. Pilcher? Call me a bit queer in the head, if you like. The easiest way to get rid of me is to let

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me hand you eighty dollars. All you have to do is acknowledge it in writing in behalf of Gordon Pilcher."

"And this is the sort of chum the boy acquired at Yale," sadly murmured the other.

"I can't make it clear to you—about summer baseball and so on," persisted Varney. "I could have handed the eighty dollars to the club manager, but that might not have been a perfectly safe play. It's a skittish business, this college professionalism."

"He violates every precept and instinct of hospitality, and attempts to force *board money* on me," whispered Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher, who had pounced upon this one idea and was oblivious of all others. "Good morning, Mr. Varney. I have an engagement."

Straight as a ramrod, ignoring the unhappy young man's final plea, the parent of Windy Gus strode to the hotel desk, glanced over his shoulder, and signified that he was not to be molested again by the disagreeable young man in the gray clothes. It was not Fred Varney's habit to retreat after one skirmish. His plight was ridiculous, but he had to go through with it. Later in the day he managed to waylay the wife of Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher. She was a somewhat timid, fragile woman, whose aspect suggested that she had suffered entirely too much from unhampered individual expression in her own household.

Five minutes convinced Varney that she possessed more intelligence and discernment than the boasted Pilcher stock. It was very refreshing to find some one willing to listen. The football captain's grave strength

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of character attracted her at once. He was the best kind of friend for Gordon, whose father had come near spoiling him, said she to herself.

"I am anxious to help you," she cried, "but I have a scheme that is better than for me to interfere. My daughter Anna is a girl who decided that she must express herself in her own way. She has a studio in New York. Gordon and Anna share the fortune left them by my mother. The income is largely from undivided real estate, so that, for convenience, Gordon has given Anna a power of attorney, and vice versa. Now, if she were to accept this bothersome eighty dollars from you, and receipt for it, the document would be valid even in court, as executed for Gordon. While he is in Africa, I imagine that Anna will attend to his business affairs, his bank-account, and so on, because she has the power of attorney."

"That pleases me, Mrs. Pilcher," said the grateful Varney. "It sounds so satisfactory; not a blessed flaw in it. Armed with that document, I can go back to the campus in September and never bat an eye."

"I do so wish that Gordon were to be with you next year," she sighed.

"His father did not seem to be seriously upset about his leaving college."

"I know, Mr. Varney, but is my only son to have no discipline, no fixity of purpose whatever? I had set my heart on his finishing at Yale."

Varney offered sympathy, but the congenial acquaintance was ended sooner than either wished, for

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the approach of Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher so intimidated his wife that she murmured a fluttered adieu and left the young man gazing after her. That night he departed for New York in quest of Miss Anna Pilcher and the studio in which she painted, as individual freedom dictated. It was now that the untterrified football hero experienced qualms and tremors. Girls were enchanting creatures, but hard to talk to. They got a fellow's goat unless he could hand them a line of fluffy chatter. However, if Miss Pilcher at all resembled her brother, the conversation would take care of itself.

Having found the studio without loss of time, Varney was admitted by a trim little maid servant, and requested to wait. It was an interesting place, and, while the caller surveyed the unfinished canvases, a small dog, of the terrier breed, darted from beneath a divan and displayed an acute dislike for the personality of young Mr. Varney. So long as it merely barked and growled, he paid no attention, but presently it made a rush, and nipped the leg of his trousers. This ferocious assault was unexpected, and the results were tragic. The terrier's teeth became caught in the cloth of the trousers. Varney attempted to shake loose the pestiferous little beast. His motions were vigorous, but he had no intention of inflicting a kick.

The dog freed itself and spun away with a yelp of fright just as the door opened. The young woman who stood staring in wrathful amazement could not be blamed for assuming that the foot of this strange

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young man had intentionally propelled the darling terrier half across the room. A heinous, unpardonable offense! Fred Varney wheeled and confronted a girl whose poise and dignity failed to suggest the Pilcher blood. She was quite handsome at this moment; her color heightened as she icily exclaimed:

"May I ask who you are, and why you mistreat my dog in that cowardly fashion?"

"Miss Anna Pilcher?" faltered Varney. He appeared like a victim of stage fright. "Honestly, I love that dog. Do you think I was trying to punt him through the skylight?"

She had glanced at his card, and was regarding him curiously, with slightly less hauteur.

"So you are the great Fred Varney, whom the newspapers call such a brutal football player? I arrived just in time to save poor Fido's life. But are you not an impostor? I should have expected to see a broad-shouldered gladiator chap."

Varney coughed behind his hand, a thin, melancholy figure, a little round-shouldered, a weary sag to his posture.

"I am afraid this is all there is of me," he apologized, in his diffident way. "And worry is making it less every day. If you will do me a favor——"

"You kicked my dog," said she.

"It will take you no more than three minutes, Miss Pilcher."

"I saw you kick him, Mr. Varney. You have an evil temper. Perhaps I will be good enough to hear

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what you have to say, for you are a friend of my brother, I believe."

"Please use your power of attorney, and give me Gordon's receipt for this eighty dollars, which I hold in my right hand."

"So you owe him money, do you? Most of his friends do. He is an easy mark. Why are you so anxious to pay it back?"

The weary pilgrim passed a hand across his brow and almost tottered to the divan, first looking underneath it for a lurking terrier. The woes of Varney had made him eloquent. He spoke from the depths of a sad heart, and would not be denied.

"Don't chide me, Miss Pilcher. My brain is full of pinwheels, and I rave in my sleep. I have just come from a session with your father, Mr. Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher, and I am too feeble to explain it all over again. The question at issue is whether I am eligible or not. The decision is very important. I throw myself on your mercy. It is up to you."

Miss Anna appeared startled for one of her uncommon self-possession. This singular young man, whom she had never before laid eyes on excepting at a distance, in a football combat, was addressing her in terms which indicated a proposal of marriage.

"And what was the result of the interview with my father?" she inquired, biting her lip and trying to hide her amusement behind a demeanor most demure. "Did he consider you eligible? It was awfully proper and punctilious of you to consult him, I'm sure. This

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is really quite sudden, Mr. Varney. Must I announce my decision this very minute?"

The alleged suitor straightened himself with a jerk, jumped to his feet, and glanced wildly in the direction of the door. He wore a strained, hunted expression. This terrible girl might be teasing him, but you couldn't tell where this doctrine of individual expression might lead. He had certainly balled himself up, and she had him on the run. She anticipated his symptoms of flight, and moved gracefully toward the door, in order to intercept him. He halted, frozen in his tracks, and the terrier dog, reading his coward soul, dashed out from under the divan and barked ferociously. The dauntless football captain forgot his mission as he hoarsely exclaimed:

"You misunderstand me, Miss Pilcher. I—I never made love to a girl in my life. I'm afraid of them. I have to catch a train out of town—very sorry to have troubled you."

"Please don't go," she urged, with a display of sweet, maidenly emotion which convinced him that all was lost. "It is not as if we were really strangers. I have heard so much about you, and I presume you saw my picture in Gordon's room, and he told you more or less about me. And it was only a pretext to introduce yourself—this eagerness to pay back some money you had borrowed from my brother?"

No longer lucid, the hapless Varney stammered an incoherent protest, charged for the door, dodged Miss Anna Pilcher as though he were making a thirty-yard

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run with the ball under his arm, and vanished from the studio. In the corridor he waited not for the elevator but clattered down the stairs and so into the street. In the phrase of that sport of which he was a master: "Varney had been tackled and thrown for a loss."

As he slammed the studio door behind him, Miss Anna Pilcher smiled a wicked little smile before she donned her painting-apron and resumed her task at the easel, which held an unfinished masterpiece in a slashing, impressionistic style. The terrier caught her eye, and she stooped to caress the vivacious animal, tenderly observing: "He kicked little Fido with his big, horrid foot, did he? Well, I rather fancy we got even with him. I'm sure I don't know what he was talking about, but it certainly did sound as if he had asked Mr. Briscoe Hopkins Pilcher for the hand of his only daughter. And, of course, he didn't mean that at all."

A few hours later Varney sat glowering at a morning newspaper, upon the sporting page of which he happened to discover something that interested him. It was an article displayed beneath these scandalous headlines:

WHO PAID HIS BOARD?

FAMOUS YALE ATHLETE IN AN ELIGIBILITY TANGLE

Varney gritted his teeth at discovering that he was the hero of this sensation, and proceeded to read the plausible narrative, which went on to say:

The intricate regulations devised to purify college athletics may have caught another victim. Early in July, Fred Varney,

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captain of the New Haven eleven, appeared at the Green Valley Country Club and put on a baseball uniform as a member of the club nine. It is supposed that he intended to play through the summer, but the connection suddenly ended a few days ago when Varney quitted the club in a hurry. Investigation discloses the fact that he was the guest of the club during his stay. This is admitted by the manager of the house, who can produce no vouchers or witnesses to show that the Yale athlete either paid his own living expenses or was entertained by a member of the Green Valley colony.

Varney may have been warned that he was endangering his amateur status, and this would account for his sudden departure. In the case of Moyer and Henderson, the Princeton baseball men who were declared ineligible last year, it was ruled that they had become professionals by playing for one month on the nine of a country club in New Jersey. Their excuse was ignorance of the law and the fact that they paid to the club the amount of their living expenses as soon as they were made aware of their offense. The eligibility committee, however, has since refused their plea for reinstatement.

There was no consolation in this for the tormented soul of Captain Fred Varney. He rebelled against a system of sporting ethics which was manifestly unfair, absurd, and stupid, apt to trip the fellow who was clean-handed, and useless to catch a real culprit. The blockhead of a club-house manager, anxious to keep the scandal of his thieving clerk from the newspapers, had insisted that Varney was a guest of the place for the reason that he had no record to show that Gordon Pilcher was the host.

"If a lion eats Windy Gus, and he never comes back to testify," reflected the young man, "how am I to kill this fool story? And he can't possibly turn

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up before the football season. Meanwhile this newspaper stuff will stir up a nasty rumpus."

A night's sleep, or what passed for such, found him somewhat revived and contemplating a desperate venture. He would go back to the studio and exhibit to the ruthless Anna Pilcher this newspaper indictment, which ought to cause her to comprehend the fix he was in. If she sued him for breach of promise, he could be no more distracted than at present.

Like a man about to face a firing squad, he sought the fair disturber, who proved to be in a most amiable and repentant mood, as though she owned a conscience. She was painting furiously, but laid down palette and brush and cried:

"Please don't look so like a human panic, Mr. Varney. The dog has gone out for a walk, and I have no intention of snatching you away to the altar. I think you are quite eligible, really, but I promise to take my chances with the other girls, and steal no base advantage. Now, what can I do to make you feel less forlorn?"

He gave her the newspaper in solemn silence. With puckered brows Anna perused the wretched article, and exclaimed indignantly: "One might infer that you had robbed an orphan asylum or eloped with the cook."

"I am almost fit to commit a murder," said he, in a matter-of-fact manner. "Could you beat it? Now, the proposition is for me to square the confounded business by handing the money over to you as an agent

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empowered to act for your brother. This will protect me absolutely against the charge that I accepted my living expenses for two weeks from the Green Valley Country Club. And you can understand why I need to have a valid receipt as evidence."

"Yes, I understand," she replied, with slow thoughtfulness. "Oh, I am so sorry! You see, Mr. Varney, my brother rushed in to the studio the morning before he sailed. He had to have several thousand dollars in the form of a letter of credit, and he didn't have it in the bank just then, and he wanted to use his power of attorney to draw it from my account as a loan. I thought his African stunt was perfectly silly, and I refused to lend him a cent or let him use my credit. There was a scene, a regular shindy, for Gordon has always had his own way, and I have a mind of my own. The result was that we decided to have no more undivided investments. I 'phoned one lawyer and he scampered down-town to find another, and we revoked each other's power of attorney, and it was all very disagreeable, indeed. Gordon borrowed some money on securities of his own, I imagine, to finance his trip. I know he got away in the steamer with that dissipated Billy Featherstone, whom I detest. And so I can't help you one bit, Mr. Varney."

"It's all off, then," was the pensive comment. "I tried to catch Gordon by wireless, at sea, but had to send the message at random to three different steamers. Do you know the name of the ship? Is Gordon likely to stop in London, and where?"

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"He refused to tell me anything at all. What a pity the family was not at home! You would have been spared this hateful experience at the club."

"I'm glad it gave me the opportunity of knowing you, Miss Pilcher," warmly exclaimed Varney, with unexpected gallantry. He sighed and drifted toward the exit. Just then there came from the corridor the sound of hearty laughter, mingled with a noisy flow of words. The door flew open, and Windy Gus entered—"blew in" describes it more accurately. He wore a natty suit of cream serge and carried a leather bag. Talking as he came, he had exclaimed, "a bright kid, that elevator-boy," when he fairly bumped into Fred Varney and caromed off to drop the bag and shout:

"My long-lost college chum! Well, well, well, old scout! How about it? What's the answer? Perhaps I had better explain myself. Ship broke down three days out—busted her shaft and wallowed about till a freighter came along and towed us back to little old New York. Say, I was glad of it.

"And here is my beautiful, bad-tempered sister!" cried the African traveller, clasping her to his breast. "I have come back to apologize and suggest some forgiveness. I was no gentleman. Can we kiss and make up, Anna?"

"I suppose we ought to," said she, with more composure than he displayed. "Family squabbles are bad form, but you are very trying at times, Gordon, dear. I do wish Mr. Varney could take you in hand as a keeper or guardian."

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“By the way, Fred, are you still at the Green Valley Club?” demanded Gordon. “And what’s your batting average? The team cleaning ’em all up? We’ll run down there together to-night and organize a reunion celebration in my honor. To Africa and back in a jiffy, eh?”

Varney seized the right ear of young Mr. Pilcher, holding it firmly between a sinewy thumb and finger, and led him by this handle to the divan. A poke in the belt, and Windy Gus sat down abruptly. Standing over him, Varney scowled grimly, and said, in menacing accents:

“Speak one word until I finish, and I’ll twist both ears off. Pardon me, Miss Pilcher, but it’s the only way to shut him up—brute force, violence. Will you swear, so help you, that I was your personal guest at the club?”

“Of course, you boob! Who said you weren’t? Was anybody rude to you after I left? A little dinner to-night is the thing; a few of us, and—ouch, I’ll be quiet.”

“And you signed vouchers for me? No doubt about it?”

“Sure I did. What’s more, Fred, I paid the bill before I left. It was the first of the month, and I didn’t know when mail was likely to reach me, and I didn’t want to be posted at the club for non-payment of house charges. The clerk gave me a receipt, and I tucked it in a pocket with some other papers. And I ran across them yesterday, and stowed them in my trunk. And so there you are.”

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"Thank God!" was the fervent reply.

"For my safe return? How kind of you, old man. And here's a joke on you. I paid your club bill with your own money. I was short of cash, do you see, and in the deuce of a rush, and I hopped into your room to steal your shoe-horn, and there was a pocketbook on the bureau. I touched it to the tune of seventy dollars, meaning to drop you a line from New York, but it slipped my mind. And there you are again."

"I paid my own board, then—I was nobody's guest!" shouted Varney, releasing the captive's ear.

"Nonsense. I'll give you that seventy as soon as we can trot around the bank."

"Don't you dare!" sternly exclaimed the ransomed athlete. "You didn't borrow that seventy. Get me? I paid my board with it. Hospitality be hanged! A college man who plays ball for fun in the summer can afford to be nobody's guest."

"Have it your own way. You are a stubborn animal," cheerfully agreed Gordon Pilcher. "Somebody called you a professional?"

"Forget it," admonished Varney. "Never mention the word, or you will have to wear a false ear. I'll bite it off next time."

Miss Anna broke in to ask, with more feeling than she had shown:

"Is it true that you have been dropped from your class at Yale, Gordon?"

"Well, my final score was a trifle too low to qualify; but, after thinking it over carefully, I have decided to

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beat it for New Haven to-morrow, track the dean to his lair, and discuss it as man to man. If I tutor for the rest of the summer, I can work off some of those conditions. It's a cinch. Perhaps I can break into next year on probation."

"Your father threatens to back the dean into a corner, Gus," said Varney. "With all due respect to him, I advise you to head him off and plead your own cause. I tell you what I'll do. If the college will give you another chance, I agree to make you study more and talk less next year."

"That will make a hit with the dean," joyfully replied the prodigal son. "Fred Varney goes bail for me—threatens harsh measures—stern, exacting adviser. I win. Now, lovely Anna, the three of us for a nice little lunch to-day and time to talk it over. I shall be declared eligible in September. Leave it to Varney."

The football captain shuddered, and spoke with deep emotion:

"Never, never use that word in my presence, Gus. It's a jinx."

"He means '*eligible*,' Gordon," explained Anna. "I rather like it myself. You might ask him why."

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PERLEY HOTCHKISS was a Yale Freshman who had no intention of loafing through college. He boiled over with initiative, and the one thing that made him sad was the lack of more than twenty-four hours in a day. His mind was so active that it outran his powers of speech, and he was apt to stutter when excited because he could not spill the words fast enough. He was thin, of course, for no youth could go his gait and lay on flesh, and the sallow complexion was probably due to loss of sleep and hasty meals. At one and the same time he was competing for the *Yale News* board, the Freshman glee-club, and the debating team, drumming up trade for a clothes-pressing concern, and managing an eating-club. When not otherwise engaged, he dashed at his text-books or concocted new schemes to fill any stray crevices in his schedule.

The Freshman eleven was barred to Perley Hotchkiss, who had tons of spirit, but too few pounds of weight. He tried his best, however, and was banished from the squad on the second day. His interest was undimmed, and he considered it a duty to sprint out to the field, utter a few hearty cheers for his struggling comrades, and leg it back to the campus to keep the next engagement. This was in harmony with his doctrine that a fellow must never lose sight of the fact

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that he was a Yale man in honor bound to work like the dickens for the college.

Now, this happened to be a Freshman football team which could get on very well without the artificial stimulus of cheers. It was composed of youngsters swift and brawny who had come down from the preparatory schools famed for athletic prowess, and most of them were expected to be varsity material in another year. It was an unusual combination of talent, an eleven which would have made trouble for many college teams. They played with terrific ardor, and with a self-confidence that was half the battle.

The captain was a broad-chested, bow-legged, pugnacious tackle named Fairchild, who had worn Exeter colors for three seasons. Some sort of a feud had existed between him and his successor as captain of the school team, and it was to be inferred that they hated each other with sincere enthusiasm. Fairchild's personality dominated the other Freshmen, who began to think as he did, that their most important task was beating Exeter. In other seasons this match had been merely one of the preliminary schedule whose climax was the contest with the Harvard Freshmen, but the implacable Fairchild decreed otherwise. They were eternally disgraced unless they fairly wiped Phillips Exeter Academy from the football map.

The Exeter lads got wind of this hostile attitude, but were undismayed. They fanned the flame in letters to friends at New Haven, poking fun at Fairchild as a sulky brute who was making a spectacle of himself.

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What he needed was a good licking, and the Exeter team was ready to hand it to him. Gradually several hundred Freshmen, who had no idea what it was all about, became possessed of the notion that the prestige of their glorious class was staked on this football issue with the ancient preparatory school in New England. They were an impulsive herd, easily swayed by prejudice, and the embittered Fairchild was naturally regarded as a leader.

Perley Hotchkiss had never even beheld the town of Exeter, and his diploma had been granted by a public high school, but he displayed an intense interest in this quarrel. He began a canvass of the class to ascertain how many men would pledge themselves to accompany the team to Exeter and show their loyalty. It was their duty to go, he asserted, whether they could afford it or not. The team must have their support. Alas, the response was disheartening. No more than a handful of Freshmen signed the paper which Perley Hotchkiss circulated with so much conscientious zeal. The trouble with the others was mostly financial. Guileless and ignorant, they had been already separated from their allowances for the autumn term.

"It's no cheap little trip to New Hampshire and back," argued one of them. "There is the railroad fare and either a hotel bill or two nights in a sleeping-car, and incidentals to beat the band. The jaunt will make twenty-five dollars' worth of money look all shot."

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"Q-quite right," stammered Perley, who was agitated, "b-but we owe it to the finest Freshman team that ever s-stepped on a field."

"I wish somebody owed it to me," sighed the other. "Then you could watch me step out and try to collect. I admire your pep, but you can't round up a crowd."

"I have another week to get busy in!" cried Perley, whose elocution was back on the rails and running smoothly. "I am pretty good at organizing things." He flung out an arm in a nervous gesture, his eager features wore a startled expression, and he blurted, again tripping over his consonants:

"I just t-thought of something. They hit me s-suddenly, right out of a clear sky. I went West last summer and spent t-two weeks on a ranch. See you later."

What had occurred to Perley Hotchkiss in this inspirational manner was the proposition of transporting a crowd of Freshmen to Exeter in a freight-car. The expense per head would be trifling. Billed as livestock, their car would be sent through promptly and they ought not to have to spend more than one night on the road. With plenty of hay to sleep on, and some stuff to eat, they could be comfortable and happy. Procrastination was no thief of Perley's time, and he hurried down-town at once to the offices of the railroad.

He was passed along from one clerk to another until a traffic official listened courteously to his statement and proceeded to explain that his singular demand was

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out of the question. Perley Hotchkiss fidgeted for an opening, scowled most earnestly, and delivered himself of this breathless argument:

"I think you miss my p-point. If we can't be shipped as live-stock, my s-scheme is that we go as attendants, just as the cowboys ride to Omaha or Denver in the c-cattle trains. I have figured it out, and I can't see how you can t-turn us down."

The railroad official, viewing this persistent Freshman as an entertaining novelty, kept a serious face and gravely inquired: "Do you mind explaining how you boys expect to be passed as attendants in a live-stock car which contains no genuine live-stock?"

"Easy enough," replied Perley. "I will put a p-pig in a crate, and a p-pig certainly classes as live-stock. And we fellows will go along to take care of him."

"Fifty or sixty of you?" was the comment. "That pig would be mighty well taken care of. You are such an ingenious young man that I am truly sorry to discourage you. But it can't be done. The regulations stand in the way. The number of men allowed to ride with live-stock must be limited. If I let you escort a pig to Exeter, the precedent would be bad for the company. Every stranded theatrical troupe could get back to Broadway cheap by purchasing one small pig."

"Anyhow, it's a corker of a scheme," faltered Perley Hotchkiss, his elation so subdued that he no longer stuttered. "Maybe I can think of something else in

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the next few days. I have set my heart on getting a mob of heelers for that Exeter game."

"By all means come and talk it over with me," was the cordial injunction. "You make me forget my troubles."

The traffic official passed it along as an excellent joke at lunch, and the story made its way through the office building until it reached the second vice-president. He laughed and thought no more about it until he went home to dinner that night. There he found a guest, a languid and leisurely Yale Senior, whose name was Jeremiah Altemus, junior. The father of Jerry was a railroad magnate of the Middle West, who had been an intimate friend of the vice-president for many years. The latter had therefore welcomed the son to the hospitality of his home in New Haven. It was an agreeable refuge, and Jerry had formed the habit of sauntering in quite informally.

It was with gusto that the host related the episode of Perley Hotchkiss and the live-stock car, and Jerry listened across the table with a faint, sardonic smile. He had encountered Perley, who dunned him for subscriptions and patronage of various kinds. It was praiseworthy of a Freshman to display such infernal zeal, but he was a pest, in Jerry's estimation, and deserved to be toned down. He was too glaring a feature of the campus landscape. Jerry had prepared at Exeter, and he was fond of the school. The bad feeling which had been stirred up by the bellicose Fairchild was most deplorable. It would be all wrong to

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send a crowd of Freshmen to the game. In their silly mood, they might start a rough-house and impair the relations between Yale and Exeter. It was a bump-tious Freshman class, objectionably so now that its football team seemed to be invincible.

These righteous thoughts Jerry kept to himself, but there was mischief in his eye as he loafed in the library with the vice-president after dinner and talked shrewdly of current affairs, for he was wise for his years and accustomed to the society of older men. At the opportune moment he suggested, in silken accents:

"This Perley Hotchkiss really deserves to win, don't you think, sir? Now if there was any way to stretch the rules a bit and let him have a live-stock car—that dodge of his about the pig is so deucedly neat—and it could be kept out of the newspapers so as not to establish an awkward precedent for you."

"There is the interstate commerce commission, for one thing," amiably replied the other, "and a lot of rules about freight and passenger traffic."

"But on some of your little, back-country branch lines you still run mixed trains," argued Jerry; "one battered old coach sandwiched between freight-cars. This live wire of a Perley Hotchkiss has sprung something new on you. If you could see any way to cut the red tape and haul these burbling Freshmen to the end of your road, and turn them over to the Boston & Maine as fast freight, green and perishable——"

The vice-president was a stout and kindly man with

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a sense of humor, and he had once been a Yale undergraduate himself. Besides, he was fond of Jerry Altemus because he was the son of his father.

"If you are personally interested in this absurd pilgrimage," said he, "possibly I might be wheedled into letting it go through. However, I should insist on the pig in a crate. Freshmen are not live-stock, and you can't find them mentioned in any of our classifications. Therefore they will have to travel as pig tenders."

"Really, I should consider it a personal favor!" gratefully exclaimed Jerry, pressing his advantage. "These kids show the proper spirit. And I am sure my father will enjoy it when I write him. A railroad corporation never loses anything by behaving as if it had a human soul."

"Now, see here, Jerry, my boy," suddenly spoke the vice-president, mindful of the dignity of his position, "my name is not to appear in this, do you understand? It wouldn't do at all. I'm not sure whether you are letting me in for a felony or a misdemeanor. A railroad official never knows, these days. You might catch this Perley Hotchkiss on the campus and discuss things in a casual manner. Mention the Exeter game, and ask him how many Freshmen expect to go with the team. Then you can artfully suggest that he tackle the railroad again, never say die, and all that."

"Egg him on? He doesn't need it, sir. One hint and he won't wait to listen. With an air of authority,

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as the son of a railroad man, I will merely slip him a word of advice."

The dawdling Jerry could be energetic when the occasion demanded. He waylaid Perley Hotchkiss after chapel next morning, and flattered that ingenuous youth by displaying a paternal interest in his affairs. Young Mr. Altemus was one of the exclusive coterie of Seniors who dwelt on Olympian heights, and it was a condescension for him to notice a Freshman. Perley blushed and thanked him, waited a moment for courtesy's sake, and was off like a bullet. The unscrupulous Jerry, who dearly loved a conspiracy, smiled a meaning smile and sauntered in search of a partner. Bob Sedgwick and Fred Varney were tied hard and fast to the varsity eleven. Several other men had good reasons for keeping clear of "fool stunts," and Jerry finally enlisted that massive person, Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan, who was better known as "Sleepy Mike."

Perley Hotchkiss was tremendously pleased to find that the railroad was willing to reconsider his unusual request. Speedily he recruited as many loyal Freshmen as could possibly be crowded into a live-stock car. The janitor of a dormitory agreed to buy a pig and stow it in his back yard until needed. The enterprise was to be kept secret. Perley feared the Sophomores, who would like nothing better than a chance to raid this excursion. The Freshmen were their natural and lawful prey.

There were no portents of trouble, however, and late in the afternoon of Friday the members of the party

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stole from the campus and gathered at the rendezvous in the freight-yard. They carried suitcases and bundles wrapped in newspapers, which looked as if they might be blankets. A shifting engine was noisily sorting out cars and making up the express freight. The conductor informed Perley that he had been told to insist on a quick transfer for live-stock car No. 32456, and that orders had been sent ahead to that effect. With good luck, it ought to be out of the terminal junction bright and early in the morning, and dropped on the siding at Exeter by noon of Saturday.

It was, in fact, the jolliest kind of a lark, far more fun than riding in a Pullman. They nestled in the hay and cheered every few minutes as the train rattled past farm and village in the cold, clear night. By the light of a brakeman's lantern swinging from the roof, they played cards, and a volunteer glee-club sang itself hoarse. The pig in the crate received their thoughtful attention. Never was a pig so personally conducted. A ribbon of Yale blue was knotted about his crinkly tail, and he wore a blanket on which were emblazoned the class numerals. He was fed at frequent intervals on pie, sandwiches, doughnuts, peanuts, and ginger ale. It was Perley's intention to lead him upon the Exeter field as the mascot of the Freshman invasion.

There was no opportunity to tumble out and scout for coffee and a civilized breakfast until the car had been switched to another train and was rumbling through the northern part of Massachusetts. Then

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came a delay and a halt to let a passenger local pass. The siding was in a small town, and across the street from the station the hungry Freshmen descried the sign of a restaurant. They charged in a body with whoops of joy, nor lingered to brush the hay from their garments. The early morning had been frosty, and they were chilled and stiff and weary.

It was a little restaurant, unprepared for this onslaught, and they fell upon it like a swarm of locusts. The vanguard filled it to the doors, and the overflow clamored on the sidewalk. During this confusion there approached the siding, from the opposite track, two young men who moved rapidly, but without excitement, as though they knew precisely what they were doing. One was dark and slender, and his manner was sophisticated, while the other towered hugely, his features placid and innocent. They very much resembled Jeremiah Altemus, junior, and Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan. The freight-train screened them from discovery by the Freshmen who were engaged in storming the restaurant. Warily they beckoned the conductor and a brakeman and held a low-voiced conference. There must have been some pre-arrangement, for the conductor glanced at a memorandum which had been given him at the terminal junction. Presently he also held in his hand something which looked like paper currency. This he divided with the brakeman. They were honest men, but they had large families, and they needed the money.

One of them acted as a sentry while the pig in its

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crate was shoved out of a side door of the live-stock car. Surfeited by a rich and varied diet, the pig emitted not one solitary warning squeal as it was carried across the tracks and hoisted into a waiting wagon. The driver whipped his horse, and the purloined pig vanished around the nearest corner. A moment later, Messrs. Altemus and Jordan hurdled into an automobile and even more swiftly absented themselves. Their flight was in the direction of Exeter. Jerry, who was at the steering-wheel, ejaculated, as they gained the open country:

"My, but I did want to stick around and see the sport! Unsafe, though! Those Freshmen would be apt to start something if they could lay hands on us."

"You surely did engineer a complicated jest," drawled Jordan, "but it seems to be coming through according to schedule. How did you dope it out that the bunch would fall off the train for breakfast at this particular hamlet?"

"Railroad talent shines in the Altemus family. I inherit my share of it," was the modest answer. "You observed that I used the telephone freely this morning."

"And greased the skids with lavish coin, no doubt," said the large one. "You seem to be able to corrupt transportation systems just as if you were a State legislature, or vice versa."

"Not guilty," laughed Jerry. "I am strong for the uplift. This performance is warranted absolutely harmless. It gives Perley Hotchkiss a bully chance to show how he can organize himself in an emergency."

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Meanwhile the carload of Freshmen had swept the restaurant bare of everything but the crockery, and they began to straggle back to the train. It was the nimble Perley who was first to climb into the live-stock car, and he promptly uttered a loud cry of dismay. There was no pig in a crate, as he assured himself after blinking rapidly at the place where the pig had been. His comrades demanded an explanation, but he had none to offer. He rushed toward the caboose to find the conductor, who stood outside chatting with a brakeman.

"Shy a pig, are you?" replied the conductor, who was quite calm and collected. "Some of you lads ought to have stayed to watch it."

"You are resp-p-ponsible," spluttered Perley, who was greatly perturbed. "Why didn't you keep an eye on our p-pig?"

"With fifty or sixty of you pig tenders in charge? You're joking. If you have a case against the railroad for loss of property in transit, shoot it to the claim agent's office in writing."

"Oh, forget it, Perley!" broke in another Freshman. "His piglets is a nuisance. I'm glad we are rid of him."

The conductor looked at his watch, and his expression became severe as he exclaimed:

"I pull out in just ten minutes more. Sorry, but I'll have to leave you all here. You can catch a passenger-train for Exeter, or if you haven't got the price, the walking is said to be good."

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This was a bombshell. Twenty Freshmen were indignantly shouting at him at once, and the brakeman looked out for a handy coupling-pin in case of need. There were symptoms of a riot. Perley Hotchkiss waved his arms and yelled for silence. He was the rightful leader and spokesman.

"This car is b-billed through to Exeter, New Hampshire, as express freight!" he cried. "What's more it's p-paid for, and I have the company's receipt in my contract. I'll sue for damages and c-collect thousands of dollars. What's the matter with you, anyhow? Have you gone c-crazy?"

The conductor stolidly stood his ground. If he winked at the brakeman, it was done with a finesse that defied detection.

"Your bill of lading calls for live-stock," was the firm response. "There is no more live-stock in the car. I have no authority to carry you as passengers. You are travelling in charge of live-stock, and where is it?"

"You can search us!" sighed Perley, whose active wits were stalled on a dead centre. "On the level, you don't really mean to throw us off? How the d-dickens can we get back to New Haven? We didn't bring much money with us."

"Produce the pig and you are entitled to occupy the car," was the cruel mandate. "All I have to go by is the rules of the company."

The gloom was heavy as a wet blanket. The Freshmen gazed wanly at each other, and then turned to

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Perley Hotchkiss, as by a common instinct. He perceived that they expected him to extricate them, and he aroused himself. If the expedition should come to grief in this lamentable manner, the scoffing campus would never let go of it. His career was at stake. He threw back his head, squared his shoulders, and his eyes sparkled, as he declaimed to the conductor:

"Live-stock, eh? Here, fellows, chase yourselves and p-pick up anything you can find—a dog, a cat, a chicken. Borrow, buy, or steal it. And beat it back to the train. It doesn't have to be a p-pig. You've got five minutes more."

"There's a live rattlesnake in a glass case over yonder, in the window of a saloon, Perley," piped up one Freshman. "After you, Alphonse."

"There goes a horse I'll bet we can buy for ten dollars!" yelled another. "But he will fall down if you take him out of the shafts."

"He won't do!" shouted Perley. "No time to load him on the car."

At this critical moment there came trotting into view a fractious goat attached to a two-wheeled cart, a small boy whacking him with a stick. He was a patriarchal goat whose whiskers were gray, and his temper had grown no better with advancing years. The Freshmen roared with delight and scared the small boy by dashing at him from all sides. He managed to comprehend that they wanted to buy the goat and named seven dollars as the price. The parting seemed to cause him no sorrow. He informed Perley that the

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derned old goat had butted him pretty near into the middle of next week.

The prize was snatched out of his harness and picked up bodily by a dozen pairs of arms. As they ran for the train, the conductor gave the signal to go ahead.

The cars were slowly moving as they hurled themselves aboard, clutching the goat. The last Freshmen were drawn in by the neck, and the party, all present and accounted for, was again rattling along on the road to Exeter. They cheered for Yale, for their class, for Perley Hotchkiss, and loudest of all for the goat, who was dubbed Mortimer Spence because of a fancied resemblance to an estimable member of the Yale faculty.

The conductor sat in the caboose listening to the jubilant racket, and he appeared annoyed. After making a nefarious bargain with Jerry Altemus, he had failed to deliver the goods. To the pensive brakeman he grumbled:

"These Freshmen are the guys that put the *live* in live-stock. Get me? They outguessed us. If we could have beat 'em to the goat, but they saw it first."

"I'm not so awful sorry," was the reply. "I never was any too strong for these practical jokes. Young Altemus and that seven-foot side-kicker of his seemed to think it was a scream. Say, we don't have to refund, do we?"

"Not on your life, George! We stand pat. There's no danger of a comeback."

The Freshmen had forgotten their grudge against

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the railroad. The goat was more fun than a circus. It was necessary to hold him in leash with a couple of leather belts, for he rammed his way from one end of the car to the other. With room for a fair start, he moved as if shot from a howitzer. At the first attempt he smote Perley Hotchkiss in the pit of the stomach. The dauntless leader doubled up like a hinge and uttered a sighing moan. It was several minutes before he recovered his wind sufficiently to call Mortimer Spence harsh names. After a spirited tussle, two tiny blue flags were attached to the sweeping horns. It was eminently fitting that Perley should lead the procession to the Exeter field and escort the goat, but he firmly declined. Whenever the goat waggled its head at him and blatted defiance, Perley clapped his hands to his stomach. Once was enough.

At the railroad station in Exeter, Jerry Altemus awaited the arrival of an express from Boston, hoping to meet some of his old school friends who might be coming back for the game. He was in the best of spirits. There would be no crowd of noisy, hostile Freshmen to make asses of themselves, and they had been taught a necessary lesson. To be ditched in a strange town ought to do them a whole lot of good. That bright boy, Perley Hotchkiss, would be less conspicuous on the campus after this. Jerry was airing these sentiments when a freight-train pulled in, backed and went ahead again, and dropped what was unmistakably a live-stock car.

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It was empty, of course, concluded Jerry, and he grinned in a heartless manner. A moment later, there came rocketing from the car a long, concerted cheer with three "Yales" tacked on the end of it. Jerry's happy smile faded, and he cast a sad, perplexed glance at Sleepy Jordan. It was not an exit, but an eruption, from the car as the Freshmen hastily formed a line behind Perley Hotchkiss and a braver youngster who led a gray-whiskered, rampant goat.

"Now where did they get it?" said Jerry with a sigh.

"Perhaps the conductor double-crossed you," suggested Jordan. "He may have turned around and sold them the goat. Either that, or you failed to size up the acute intellect that sizzles beneath the hat of Perley Hotchkiss."

"I lose," was the reply. "Listen to the idiots. They are cheering Mortimer Spence. Where does the professor of constitutional English history break into the plot?"

"Maybe they hid him in the car to use as live-stock in case somebody steals the goat."

Jerry turned away and refused to look at the Freshman parade which was romping in the direction of the nearest street. Their line of march led past the lawns and buildings of the school, and the news spread swiftly. This spectacular invasion was accepted as a challenge, and the Exeter lads decided to muster for a procession to the field. It was inferred that these Freshmen were friends and followers of their own foot-

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ball captain, Fairchild, and partisans of his personal grudge against the Exeter captain. For this reason the welcome was not cordial.

When the rival elevens confronted each other it was seen that the Exeter captain, who was tall, freckled, and red-headed, had shifted his own playing position from guard to tackle, which brought him opposite Fairchild in the rush line. They glowered at each other in a ferocious manner, as if determined to make it a combat instead of a game.

Jerry Altemus surveyed them with marked disapproval and asked one of the schoolboys:

"What ails those two man-eaters? How did it start? They certainly do not love each other."

"It was a girl," solemnly answered the informant, who must have been all of seventeen, and spoke as a man of the world. "'Bull' Fairchild and 'Slugger' Hammill, our captain, were desperately in love with her last year, when they were both at Exeter. She promised to go to a school dance with one of them, I forget which, and then chucked him up for the other. That sort of thing won't do. Girls don't seem to realize the seriousness of it. A fellow's whole life may be blighted."

"And is the fickle fairy here to-day, may I inquire?"

"Yes. I like her nerve, don't you? We have an idea that she has promised to favor whichever captain wins the game, just to sic 'em on. Some women are heartless."

"It was ever thus, my son," murmured Jerry.



This spectacular invasion was accepted as a challenge.

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"They like to sit in the arena and waggle thumbs down."

The first ten minutes of the game showed that the captains twain were aptly nicknamed. They were earnest players, but they appeared to forget that the gentle pastime of football was presumed to enlist the services of eleven men on a side. They were contented to fight it out between themselves. The logical result was that one lost his temper and the other mislaid his about two seconds later. A signal, a scrimmage, a run down the field, and twenty youngsters were intent on the ball, while Bull Fairchild and Slugger Hammill remained behind, absorbed in pounding each other.

It was an absurd sight, this pair of tackles isolated, taking no part in the play, fists flying, until an official rushed up to separate them. He promptly ruled them both off the field, snatched them out of the game, and scolded like a stern parent. Sheepish was the aspect of the two captains as they retreated to the side-lines, heartily ashamed of themselves. Their behavior had been that of undisciplined children, and they had failed in their duty to their respective teams. Sobered and repentant were Bull Fairchild and Slugger Hammill, fallen champions, but the effect on their followers was quite the contrary.

The Yale Freshmen were convinced that the Exeter man was guilty of starting the ruction. The school-boys were no less certain that Fairchild had struck the first blow.

"Mucker ball!" yelled an Exeter cheer leader, wildly

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brandishing his megaphone. "Chase 'em off the field. They think they can play mucker ball and get away with it."

The Freshman party was vastly outnumbered, but Perley Hotchkiss cared not for the odds. Unterrified was his mien as he shouted: "Chase n-nothing! This S-Slugger Hammill was looking for t-trouble, and he g-got it. Serve him right if F-Fairchild knocked his b-block off."

The officials and members of the Exeter faculty quieted the disturbance and threatened to end the game if the crowd could not behave like young gentlemen. Play was resumed, the tactics of both teams shaky and uncertain without leadership. Yale managed to score a touch-down on a ragged series of rushes, and Exeter elected to depend upon the toe of its full-back, who was a proficient drop-kicker. His first attempt was easily successful, and the school felt confident that he could repeat the trick, because the Freshmen were unable to force the playing away from dangerous territory.

Among the spectators were several hundred townspeople, and they were loudest in applause of the agile drop-kicker. He belonged to them, it seemed, as the son of an old Exeter family, and had grown up in the town. If his father was present it must have been difficult for him to recognize his offspring in this lanky, mud-besmeared figure armored in leather cap and nose-guard, his red jersey torn half off his back and flapping in tatters.

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Mortimer Spence, the venerable goat, had been vexed by the noise and commotion around him. The experience rasped his nerves, and kind words failed to soothe him. His guardians tried to lead him up and down the side-line as a harbinger of victory, but he either balked or knocked the pins from under innocent bystanders. The football players seemed to provoke his ire more than anything else. He was anxious to take part in a scrimmage.

The Exeter full-back stood thirty yards from the Yale goal-posts. He was tensely poised to receive the ball and lift it for another drop-kick that should clinch a victory for his school. The disorganized Freshmen were at his mercy. The crowd was silent and breathless. It was the crucial instant of the game. The hush was broken by a long and angry bleat from Mortimer Spence. He reared, plunged forward, and gained his liberty.

Perhaps it was the flapping red jersey of the Exeter full-back that caught his sinister eye. At any rate, he picked his target without hesitation or wavering. Head down and tail up, he flew like an arrow, a battering-ram propelled with amazing energy. Nobody shouted a warning. With one accord, the spectators held their breath. They simply had to see the finish. Curiosity overpowered them. The full-back was too intent on his task to note the quick thud of flying feet behind him.

Just as the ball was passed to him, Mortimer Spence arrived. In his long and wicked life he had never

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achieved a collision so brilliant as this. The thump was heard across the field. The hapless full-back shot ahead, landed on hands and knees, and furrowed the turf with his nose. He had never before gained five yards as suddenly as this. The ball went spinning off to one side, and was pounced upon by an alert Freshman who sprinted for the Exeter goal, but the referee stopped laughing long enough to call him back on the ground of interference.

Ordering Mortimer off the field was easier said than done. He was eager to add another red jersey to his score.

During this lively interlude, the Exeter stripling who sat next to Jerry Altemus seemed to be in the throes of conflicting emotions. He denounced the Yale Freshmen as a bunch of cheap sports who had purposely turned loose the goat in order to spoil a drop-kick, while in the next breath he declared that it served the smitten full-back right. This paradox interested Jerry, who turned to inquire in bland accents:

"Would you mind elucidating yourself just a few? What about your unfortunate schoolmate who was knocked heels over head?"

"Why, he used to own that goat," answered the lad. "We lived in the same street when we were kids, right here in Exeter. I recognized the goat the minute I laid eyes on him. Jim Stone—that's our full-back—sold the goat to a boy that moved to Haverhill, or somewhere near there. Jim was mighty unkind to that goat. He used to wallop the tar out of it, and I

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guess he put a crimp in its disposition. That's why I couldn't help saying it served him right."

"Ha, ha, the long arm of coincidence, likewise a package of poetic justice!" chuckled Jerry.

"Something like that," agreed the Exeter student, "but it's a rotten trick to break up a football game with a hellion of an old billy-goat."

Jerry's attention was drawn to the field. The officials had ordered the teams to resume the game. There was much angry argument, but the Exeter players sulkily obeyed. They pounded away at the Freshman line and gave the full-back another opportunity for a drop-kick. He was nervous, however, and frequently glanced over his shoulder. Perley Hotchkiss and his comrades were chanting: "We've got his goat! Oh, *have* we got his goat? Whose goat did we get? Jim Stone's goat!"

This was no idle figure of speech. The full-back was not the same man. Mortimer Spence was now securely fastened with a rope, but his victim was obviously afraid the rope might break. The shock to his nerves had been severe, and he knew that goat of old. Twice he essayed a goal from the field and failed miserably. The first attempt booted the ball into the rush line, and the second drove it into a grand-stand. The Freshmen ba-a-a-ed derisively. Their eleven pulled itself together and tore through for long gains. It looked as if they had Exeter on the run.

Then it was that Bull Fairchild, the ejected captain, showed himself to be a sound sportsman at heart.

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He consulted with Jerry Altemus, who was a Yale Senior and a prominent alumnus of Exeter, and asked his advice.

"It's not fair for us to play eleven men and a goat on our team," said Fairchild, who was very unhappy. "Exeter had us licked when the goat butted into the game. That full-back of theirs has gone all to pieces."

"I was hoping you would feel this way," replied Jerry with a friendly smile. "It has been a poor performance for Yale men all the way through."

"My fault, most of it, Mr. Altemus," doggedly affirmed the captain. "I stirred up a lot of nasty feeling, and I'm awfully sore on myself."

"What do you suggest, Fairchild?"

"That we stop the game and call it off. The Freshmen can score another touch-down or two—it's a cinch with the Exeter full-back up in the air, but I don't want to win a game that way."

"Bully for you!" cried Jerry. "Shall I propose it, or will you speak to the Exeter captain?"

"I guess I had better have it out with Slugger Hammill," muttered the fighting Freshman.

Presently the curious crowd beheld the two captains meet and earnestly converse. Instead of squaring off at each other, they exchanged stumbling apologies and shook hands. Then each called his team from the field and explained the reason. At this display of chivalrous spirit, the personally conducted excursion of Perley Hotchkiss regretted its behavior and cheered for both captains and their elevens, with

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no mention of the goat. Perley did not lead the chorus, however, for a friend had presented him to an uncommonly pretty slip of a girl who wore Exeter colors. It was all over with Perley, and she did not dislike him, for they strolled in the direction of the gate and left the game to its fate. The lad who sat beside Jerry Altemus stared with open mouth and confided:

"Say, could you beat it? There goes the girl that Bull Fairchild and Slugger Hammill scrapped over. She walks off with a new one."

"Accept it as a warning," Jerry told him.

The atmosphere had been cleared of its unseemly bickering and quarrelsome spirit. It occurred to the older Exeter lads to give a supper for the two elevens and the visiting Freshmen and alumni. They hired a hall and a caterer in a great hurry. It was a sort of impromptu demonstration whose purpose was to bury the hatchet with due form and ceremony. Jerry Altemus may have had something to do with instigating the love-feast, and it is fair to surmise that he helped foot the bills. All these fine lads were in a mood of repentance. It was as though they had awakened from an unhappy dream. There was no longer a break in the cordial relations that had always existed between the ancient school and the older college.

There were speeches by the two captains, who appeared rather awkward and chagrined. They sat side by side and discovered that life held many things more important than girls. Mr. Jerry Altemus made

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a graceful toastmaster, and, in conclusion, he had this to say:

“In my opinion, both teams won to-day’s game. It was a much more satisfactory finish than if the score had decided it. In that event you would have continued to dislike and misunderstand each other. Now we are all good sportsmen together, and we have found out that the code of honor and fair play is the biggest thing in athletics. I feel that we are under obligations to the goat.”

There was a scuffle in the hall, and three Freshmen hauled in the object of this eulogy. His horns were now wreathed with the colors of Exeter and Yale intertwined. He was persuaded to make the circuit of the room, and was then presented to his former owner, Jim Stone, the full-back, who seemed ungrateful. Perley Hotchkiss was flushed and tremulous with excitement when called upon for a few remarks, but he managed to stammer:

“Our c-crowd has an apology to offer. It was s-shabby of us to rattle the full-back with that cheer we invented, about g-getting his g-goat. Of course, it did strike us as awfully f-funny. We started from New Haven with a p-pig in a crate, and we arrived with a g-goat, and I guess it was a fortunate swap. Now, F-freshmen, a long cheer for Exeter, and then we’ll sing: ‘For they are jolly, good f-fellows.’”

When the pleasant evening ended, Perley was about to lead his companions to the live-stock car, but Jerry Altemus intervened. He was not ready to confess,

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but he could try to square his conscience. Leading Perley aside, he informed him:

"It will be no fun to go back to New Haven in a freight-train. The novelty has worn off. You fellows have behaved well, and you are a credit to Yale. Spend the night here, some of you at the hotel, and the rest in the school dormitories. The boys will be glad to take care of you. To-morrow morning you can go through to New Haven in parlor-cars. The tickets will be at the station. Oh, bother your thanks! The expense will be met by anonymous friends."

"We're g-game to go home by freight, Mr. Altemus," protested Perley. "I never heard of such g-generosity."

"Well, it's not exactly that," said Jerry, with a shrug. "By the way, have you any theory to account for the disappearance of the pig in the crate?"

"Not the slightest idea, Mr. Altemus. What do you t-think about it?"

"It gets my goat, Perley," was the earnest verdict of Jeremiah Altemus, junior.

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ANTONIO COLORADO was a genuine red man and a Sophomore at Yale. He was readily distinguished from the so-called "Indians" of the campus who were merely exuberant youths inclined to seek the war-path whenever an athletic victory offered an excuse, and who were liable to be caught by the faculty if they didn't watch out. Antonio had spent several years at Carlisle, learning a trade and expecting to work among his own kind on a reservation. The patron who had befriended him decided otherwise, however, and a tutor was engaged to fit him for college. A leisurely period of study and travel, and this keen-witted son of the Sioux passed the examinations with ease.

As a Freshman he was a novelty, distinctly a sensation; but this feeling wore off until he was carelessly taken for granted as one of the crowd. The straight black hair, the coppery complexion, the high cheekbones suggested the savage ancestry of Antonio Colorado, but here the likeness stopped short. His manners were suave and gracious. They fitted him perfectly. He was sure of himself in any company, with none of the gruff taciturnity of his race. Some distant strain of Spanish blood may have accounted for this,

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as well as for his undeniable good looks. Lithe and tall, he was a figure to command attention, a native American, true to the Fenimore Cooper tradition.

Fred Varney, captain of the Yale eleven, was a man of a morose disposition and strong dislikes, which he made no effort to dissemble. His greeting was far from cordial when Antonio presented himself at the football-field. The latter affected not to notice the rebuff, and his polished courtesy was unruffled as he said:

"Any objection to my joining one of the scrub teams, Varney, and playing for the fun of it?"

"Suit yourself," was the indignant reply. "Were you on the Carlisle eleven? I don't recall your name."

"Nothing more than a substitute. I couldn't go out regularly. I was taking extra courses and doing a lot of shop work. There is more leisure at Yale. I shall go in for athletics a bit."

Varney made no comment, but turned to speak to a friend. Antonio glanced at him with an expression of subtle amusement, and his shrug was even more eloquent. It was quite obvious that the gaunt, silent Yale captain was prejudiced against Indians in general, and against Antonio Colorado in particular. The varsity squad was for palefaces only. Here was a recruit, however, who could not be so easily disregarded, for he had the mind and the physique of an uncommon athlete.

It was Fred Varney's second year as captain, a rare honor, and he played his usual position at one end of

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the line. For the other end, there were several candidates, and among them Antonio flashed into prominence after a week's practice. Grudgingly Varney realized that the Sioux was to be taken seriously, and he shifted him to the second eleven for the daily tussle against the picked men of the varsity formation.

It was Varney's arrangement that Antonio and he should face each other as end rushers during this early season of trial and experiment. The Indian was fast and brilliant and showy, but the cynical captain doubted his courage and proposed to give him a double dose of medicine. The college soon became interested in what was a desperate duel of wits and strength and fleetness. These two clashed as if some personal issue were at stake, the emaciated, round-shouldered captain, with his pallid, saturnine face, who looked like an invalid and tackled like a demon; and the handsome red man, clean-built and graceful, all vivacious alertness and reckless energy. Temperamentally Varney was far more like the stolid, unsmiling Indian of fiction.

It was in the dressing-room, after a bruising hour of practice, that Bob Sedgwick, the guard, said to the captain:

"The Kilkenny cats had nothing on you and this Sioux person, Fred. Far be it from me to butt in, but isn't he good enough to be put into the regular line-up? The coaches think so. I heard them discussing it yesterday. With you as one end and Antonio as the other, the combination ought to be unbeatable."

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Varney paused before stepping into a shower-bath and growled with emphasis:

"I'm the man to say who plays on this team. And I don't expect the coaches to interfere. I never had any use for niggers and Indians. Do you get that?"

"But that is foolish," persisted Sedgwick. "This is no question of drawing the color-line. This man is your social equal, or mine. I suppose you believe the only good Indian is a dead one, so you are hoping to lay him out cold on the football-field."

Varney grinned at this, and permitted himself to reply: "I am sort of anxious to find out which is the better man, Bob. I can't help hating the darned cuss, and there are days when he comes pretty near playing me off my feet."

"It will be the undertaker's wagon for two if you don't call it off," was Sedgwick's cheerful comment.

Until now, this pair of adversaries had kept their tempers under control. The game they played was hard and rough, and their end of the line was no place for children; but it was football all the time. When Varney tackled the Indian, or vice versa, it was not a gentle collision. The victim smote the turf as though he had been dropped from the roof of a skyscraper. And a cut lip or a barked nose or black eye suggested that a fist instead of an open hand might have been used in the heat of a scrimmage. It was give-and-take, however, and no foul tactics. They were too shrewdly intent on the game to be diverted by the personal equation.

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There came an afternoon, however, when this rivalry flamed into an open quarrel. The ban of secret practice was removed in order that the undergraduates might see their team in action. They trooped to the field two thousand strong, led by a brass band, and were eager to cheer themselves breathless. Varney decided to drive his men through four full periods at top speed against the strongest second eleven that could be mustered. It was to be a merciless test that should expose any vital flaws.

The first few minutes of play were unlucky for the varsity side. A fumble and a bungled signal, and the second team swept down the field for an easy touchdown. While they had the jump, their deftest kicker proceeded to drop a goal from the field. In the opinion of the bleachers they were making a holy show of Fred Varney's alleged champions. This did not sweeten the captain's mood. The responsibility of pulling his team together impaired his efficiency as an end rush just enough to give Antonio Colorado the advantage of the argument. For the first time in his extraordinary career, Fred Varney was unmistakably outplayed.

It was a matter which affected him more than it did the spectators, who were pleased to discover that in Antonio Colorado the coaches had developed so formidable a man for the other end of the Yale line, a fit mate for the great Varney. They applauded the pair impartially.

Presently the varsity full-back lifted a long punt

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deep into the enemy's territory. Varney eluded the Indian, who endeavored to block him, and followed the kick down the field, running with that deceptive, slouching gait which would have covered a hundred yards in close to even time. The player who stood waiting to catch the punt misjudged its flight, and the ball slipped through his arms and took an erratic bound. Varney turned in his headlong course and dived after it. For an instant the field was clear to the goal, but the muddy field was treacherous, and before he could regain a footing the speediest of the foe-men were almost upon him.

One of these he dodged, but the effort made him stumble, and he sprawled his length, rolling over and over. Just then Antonio Colorado, sprinting like a wild man, his black hair dishevelled, knocked the varsity quarter-back out of the way with a thrust of his shoulder, and hurled himself at Varney to pin him before he could wriggle onward or scramble to his feet. It was difficult to perceive precisely what happened when they came together. The Sioux appeared to try to check himself; but he, too, slipped in the last stride, and, instead of flinging his arms around Varney, he drove into him with both knees.

The Yale captain was prostrate at that instant, his face uppermost, the ball hugged to his chest. The impact of Antonio's knees was terrific, and they struck Varney in the stomach. He groaned once and lay all limp and relaxed, his eyes closed. The game was halted, and the trainer and a doctor pushed through

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the distressed crowd of players. It was no uncommon mishap for a man to have the wind knocked out of him, but this seemed more serious, and it was feared that Varney might have suffered some internal injury. He was carried from the field, still unconscious, and placed in an automobile; but just before the driver started for the hospital he came to himself and muttered, in his grim fashion:

"What's this nonsense? I'm all right. The Indian tried to get me, but he didn't jump on me hard enough."

Antonio was anxiously hovering near by, and he hastily exclaimed, with manifest emotion:

"It was an accident, Varney. I give you my word of honor. I meant to make a fair tackle, but I tripped and lost my balance. I fell on top of you. It may have looked like a dirty trick, but I wouldn't have done it purposely for anything in the world."

"It was an Indian trick," rasped Varney, in a faint voice, his face twisting with pain. "I won't forget it. You and your apologies can go to blazes."

The coaches dismissed the two teams for the afternoon, and the army of undergraduates trailed back to the campus in a humor sadly subdued, the brass band silent. The feeling toward Antonio was not altogether hostile. He had many friends who were ready to accept his explanation; while, on the other hand, Fred Varney had none of the qualities of popularity. A sense of fair play made many inclined to suspend judgment; but there was enough bitter partisanship

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aroused to divide the campus into factions. Varney's adherents refused to speak to Antonio, and at the varsity training-table there was a display of dissension which the coaches tried to suppress.

It was the sort of question that could be thrashed out indefinitely. One man's opinion was as good as another's. Either there had been a cold-blooded attempt to cripple the Yale captain, or Antonio told the truth. Meanwhile, the victim proved that nothing more than his wind had been damaged by insisting on returning to his own rooms after one night in the hospital. For three days he watched the practice from the side-lines, and then plunged into the fray again.

It was time to choose the men who should comprise the varsity eleven and begin drilling them to work together. Antonio was promoted from the second team and given the place which he had earned beyond dispute. This separated him from Varney and ended their daily warfare. The captain was too honest to deny the Indian the honor of winning his "Y." The welfare of the college was given first place, but the private grudge still smouldered.

Bob Sedgwick had maintained a fine neutrality. He was intensely loyal to Varney, and knew the sterling worth behind the morose, unlovely demeanor; but he had also learned to like immensely the engaging Antonio. The latter took his trouble greatly to heart, and was so sensitive to the outcry against him that he was moved to confide in Sedgwick.

They had walked from the training-table across the

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campus after supper, and Sedgwick suggested that they loaf in his rooms before buckling down to the evening's hard study. Antonio accepted gratefully, breaking a pensive silence. Seated in a large chair before the fireplace, he stared at the coals and rested his chin in his hands. Sedgwick eyed him curiously. It was very hard for him to realize that this affable, cultivated Sophomore could be no more than one generation removed from the squalid barbarism of the followers of Sitting Bull. It was as though Antonio read his companion's thoughts, for he said at length, his voice like one who talked to himself:

"Yale is a lonesome place at times for my kind of man. I fancied I was getting on fairly well until this affair flew up and hit me in the face. A lot of the fellows would like to chase me back to the reservation, among the blanket Indians. My word of honor isn't as good as a white man's. They honestly believe I meant to hurt Varney."

"Some of us don't," Sedgwick assured him. "Buck up, Antonio, my boy. You will live it down. Varney has held an unfortunate grouch against you from the start, and that influences quite a few. He is the original human sour ball. We all know that."

Antonio got out of the chair and paced the room, his tread light and quick. His dark eyes burned as he exclaimed, flinging out an arm:

"I want you to promise to keep this to yourself, Sedgwick, unless this trouble drives me out of college. Then you can tell it, if you like. Thanks. *Your*

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word is enough. Varney hates and despises me because I am an Indian? Good God! Haven't I reason to hate him and all of his blood? But haven't I fought him fair and square, on the level? Dirty football? If I had meant to hurt him, couldn't I have done it a dozen times, at the bottom of a scrimmage, when nobody would have found it out? Would I have waited until we were in the open field with all the college looking on?"

"That sounds reasonable to me," quietly answered Sedgwick, who was perplexed by this vehement outburst, and failed to comprehend the drift of it. He asked:

"What the deuce do you mean by saying you have reason to hate Varney and all his blood? Is there something more to it than football?"

"Yes, considerably more," replied Antonio, again the master of himself. "As a rule, I don't bore people with the story of my life. Some of it I wish I could forget. My family was wiped out when I was a baby. It happened at Wounded Knee Creek, on the Pine Ridge Agency. It was the last Indian fight in the West, though a good many white people considered it a massacre. The soldiers couldn't stop at killing Sioux warriors. They were so brave that they hacked their way through the camp of our women and children and cut them to pieces. That is how my mother died. She had covered me with her own body, her tiny papoose, when a cavalry sabre slashed her to death. There was another soldier who must have had

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little children at home. He tied me to his saddle and left me at the agency."

Sedgwick shivered and knew not what to say. The curtain of tragedy had been lifted, and the glimpse bewildered him. Antonio Colorado showed no anger. His demeanor was sombre and impersonal as he continued:

"The charge of the soldiers was led by a captain whose name was Varney. He went on the retired list as a major-general not long ago. His only experience in action was that morning when he led the men who killed my mother."

"And he is related to Fred Varney?" queried Sedgwick.

"He is Fred Varney's father," curtly replied Antonio, the Sioux, as he halted in his stride.

"Great Scott, could you beat it!" was the inadequate comment. "I'm awfully sorry, old man. It's the queerest coincidence I ever heard of. Imagine your carrying this information around with you and standing up to Fred every day on the football-field! Whew, you certainly know how to keep a grip on yourself! I always supposed Indians hung onto a grudge like grim death."

The smile on Antonio was inscrutable. Bob Sedgwick, boyish and careless, was a stranger to deep emotions. He could not understand this man of an alien race.

"From your people I have learned a few things of value," softly spoke the Sioux. "The rules of the game

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are different from ours. There is a very old saying called the Golden Rule. Perhaps it is better than the code of the Sioux, which is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I do not mean to preach."

"Some sermon, nevertheless!" was the hearty tribute. "They seldom get them across any better in Sunday chapel. Whew, and I thought it was nothing more than a football feud! Does Fred Varney know who you are? I mean to say, has he any idea that you were rescued from that frightful mess at Wounded Knee?"

"I'm sure he knows nothing about me. How could he, Sedgwick? It was a mighty trifling episode in the last stand of the fighting Sioux. It was years before I knew the story myself, from survivors who were kin-folk of mine. I was just an orphan ward of the government. Even my Indian name was lost. Somebody called me Antonio, and I tacked on the Colorado because I liked the sound of it. At one of the Carlisle commencements I met a New York man, one of the board of visitors, and he took an interest in me. You know the rest. Varney's hatred is rather odd, in a way. People have been very decent to me, as a rule, even when they didn't fancy the color of my skin."

"It may have been transmitted from father to son," suggested the other. "That sort of thing does happen, you know. Perhaps Fred inherited this trait, or whatever you call it. I met the old gentleman, General Varney, last year. He is an amiable party, not in

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the least bloodthirsty. Walks with a cane—a stiff knee, I imagine.”

“A Sioux bullet did that,” grimly explained Antonio. “Well, I’m glad you have some faith in me. It helps. There are men in my own Sophomore class who hiss me whenever I go on the field with the team. Try to hurt Varney by any such clumsy tactics as ramming my knees into him? Why, if I were the bad Indian they think I am, he would have been shy his scalp before now.”

The next day after this interview Sedgwick received a telegram which called for instant action. He had no more time to reflect on the unhappy situation of Antonio. Miss Kitty Lombard had come from the West to pillage the shops of Fifth Avenue and make a round of visits among the friends who adored her. She was Bob Sedgwick’s favorite cousin, and she now announced her intention of invading the Yale campus escorted by a chaperon borrowed for the pilgrimage. There was sure to be something doing when the vivacious Kitty favored a place with her presence, reflected Bob, and here he was a slave to football in every spare hour of the day, and too dead tired at night to budge from his rooms.

The wording of the telegram was imperious, however, and the stalwart guard of the varsity eleven displayed more agitation than if he were about to face embattled Harvard. Dashing across the campus, he pounced upon a young man of tremendous stature and a most placid manner. His parents called him Llew-

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ellyn Chalmers Jordan, but Sedgwick hailed him otherwise:

"Hello, 'Sleepy Mike'! Glad news for you, so wake up and show some animation. You don't really have to report for football practice, do you? It's time you were canned, at any rate."

The rosy giant laid down a book, yawned, and sweetly replied:

"I have done my duty, but the brute of a Varney damned me as a left-footed mastodon that was too slow to dodge a steam-roller. I play well only when I lose my temper, and that is very bad for the digestion. I shall not be missed. What's the stunt, old top?"

"You will move faster when I tell you. My cousin is due here this afternoon—her first appearance in New Haven. You met her in my town last year, and you didn't seem to detest her."

Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan drew himself to his full height of some six feet four, expanded a fifty-inch chest in a sigh that created a draught in the room, and feelingly ejaculated:

"Miss Kitty Lombard? A wonder, my boy! A dream! I have never been the same man since that experience. When I reached home for Christmas, after that stop-over with you, my fond parents became worried. I acted strangely, and my appetite was all shot. Instead of six boiled eggs and a steak for breakfast, I pecked at an orange and a spoonful of bird-seed."

"Drivel! Save it for Kitty," said Sedgwick. "They

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all hand her that line of conversation. See here, I can't possibly turn up at that train. I'll be due at the field. Will you meet her? I am going to beat it over to the hotel and reserve rooms. Square it for me, and tell her I will run in before supper. I can't quit the training-table, even for one meal."

"Leave it all to me," was the soothing response of young Mr. Jordan. "Your cousin will journey from the station in the classiest automobile that can be hired for money, and there will be fresh flowers in her rooms. I'm glad to oblige you, Bob. No trouble at all. You really mustn't have Miss Lombard on your mind. Stick to football. As a personal conductor, I shall be strictly on the job."

Sedgwick's gratitude was effusive, and he promptly fled for the gymnasium, where an hour of signal drill was to be inserted between two recitation periods. The lazy demeanor of Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan had vanished. And he was still exceedingly wide awake when the hour arrived for him to bedeck himself in his finest raiment and set forth in the shiniest and most glittering of limousines. Miss Kitty stepped from the train and looked about for her cousin Bob. Her air of disappointment gave way to a smile of amused surprise when she descried the titanic proportions of the enamored Sleepy Jordan, who proceeded to clear a wide path across the station platform, for the crowd of passengers, after one glance, gave him plenty of room.

His bearing was a trifle flustered, but the girl ac-

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cepted his explanation with gracious thanks, and presented her companion, Mrs. Shelton, an older sister of a school friend. It was too much to expect, said Kitty, that Bob should neglect football for anything so commonplace as a wandering cousin. To this Mr. Jordan gallantly protested that she was excuse enough to make any sane man willing to chuck up college. As he proudly convoyed them to the limousine, Kitty inquired, with marked interest:

"And how is Mr. Fred Varney? So absorbed, I presume, that I can't expect even a glimpse of him."

"Oh, you remember him, do you?" replied the colossus, perceptibly chagrined. "He hasn't changed any. Full of chatter and human kindness, as usual—the life of the party."

"How sarcastic you are, Mr. Jordan! He *is* rather hard to talk to, I admit, and he takes a very gloomy view of things in general; but I like original people, and Mr. Varney is *so* extraordinarily different."

Thereupon he made himself agreeable to the chaperon, while Miss Kitty reflected, the light of mischief in her eye, that this promised to be an entertaining visit. She presently invited Mr. Jordan to dine with them at the hotel, at which he beamed once more. He left them in the lobby, after a weighty conference with the office staff. It was to be inferred that he proposed to wreck the building if Bob Sedgwick's cousin were not treated like a princess royal.

Shortly after five o'clock Bob himself hurried in and found the ladies down-stairs. They were chatting in

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the spacious lounging-room when Antonio Colorado paused to speak to a classmate while passing through to the desk. Cousin Kitty instantly took notice, and murmured excitedly:

"Isn't that the Indian who plays end rush on your team, Bob? I have seen his picture in the newspapers. He is perfectly stunning! Are you very chummy with him?"

"We are good pals. Would you like to meet him? Shall I fetch him over?"

"How nice of you! He isn't the least bit like any Indian I ever saw in the West."

"There is only one Antonio. Don't try any broken English on him, Kitty. He isn't apt to say: 'Ugh! Heap good squaw,' or anything like that. Try a few samples of Bernard Shaw, Masefield, and Alfred Noyes, and watch him come back at you!"

"How fascinating!" exclaimed the chaperon, who was a lion-hunter when on her native heath. She had swiftly pictured Mr. Antonio Colorado as a drawing-room sensation if she could beguile him to New York for a week-end. Sedgwick beckoned, and the Sioux approached with his light, graceful tread. The best tailor in New Haven made his clothes, and he knew how to wear them. He bowed over Kitty's hand with the grave courtliness that is no more in fashion. They soon found so many things to discuss that Bob was marooned with the chaperon. It so happened that Kitty was a talented student of music, and the mention of Dvořák led Antonio to disclose his keen interest in

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the plaintive folk-songs of the Sioux people, and the more colorful love-ballads of the peons of the Mexican border. At Kitty's persuasion, he promised to bring his guitar in the evening and acquaint her with some of these unwritten melodies.

During supper, at the training-table, Sedgwick informed Captain Fred Varney that Miss Lombard was in town, and, no doubt, would be pleased to have him call. The silent athlete looked up sharply, nodded his thanks, and made no remark, although his face showed the faintest trace of color. Antonio regarded him with a flicker of amusement and discreetly withheld comment. It now occurred to the undiplomatic Sedgwick that he might have started something, and he felt distinctly uneasy. There was discord enough between the two end rushers without introducing a girl complication.

"It's Kitty's fault," sighed Bob to himself. "She has the knack of setting a place by the ears. She insisted on meeting Antonio. And if I hadn't told Varney she was in town, he would have climbed all over me. I certainly hope she plays them along one at a time."

Meanwhile, at dinner in the hotel, Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan held the centre of the stage, and flattered himself that he had forestalled all rivals. Kitty scolded him for his failure as a football hero, and he enjoyed it without shame. The chaperon was pensive and a little absent-minded. She was still a young and reasonably charming woman, married to a person who

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seemed to have been designed for the sole purpose of making money hand over fist. Who could blame her if the romantic figure of Antonio Colorado stirred her fancy?

Young Mr. Jordan later accompanied them to their sitting-room, unable to detach himself, even though he had a thesis to write. He was visibly annoyed when a card was brought up, followed by Antonio Colorado in evening clothes, and a guitar in a green bag. As Llewellyn Chalmers afterward explained it to his roommate, with some bitterness:

"It was all off as soon as the smooth Sioux breezed in. Honestly, Bill, he is a real head-liner. I'll have to hand it to him. He unlimbered that darn guitar of his and tossed off these Spanish ditties in a mellow barytone voice, and there was nothing for me to do but fade. No fear of Miss Lombard getting silly over him. She is too sensible for that. He's a choice novelty. But that Mrs. Shelton, rather gushing type, don't you know—say, Antonio had her going."

"Huh, you are a vast, sandless stuff," said the roommate. "Why didn't you smash the guitar over his head and break the magic spell?"

"Because I have watched him play football," was the calm rejoinder. "Any lad who can play Fred Varney to a standstill is the original catamount. Mix it up with that Indian? I am too valuable to my dear parents!"

Bob Sedgwick had been delayed after supper, having an engagement with one of his professors. Fred

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Varney, however, had let nothing hinder him, aside from a brief conference with the coaches, and he reached the hotel shortly after the "fading" of Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan. When he walked into the sitting-room of the suite and most unexpectedly confronted Antonio and the guitar, the tableau was well worth observing. The ladies missed its significance, but were aware that something was amiss. Both men froze for the moment, Varney halting in his tracks, Antonio smiling but alert as a hawk. At the training-table they met thrice daily as strangers, exchanging never a word; but here was a situation which demanded a pretense of mutual courtesy, while at the same time the feminine factor was like a spark to make an explosion imminent.

Varney was angry, but he masked his feeling and said, with a curt nod:

"How are you, Antonio? Don't let me interfere with the concert. Go to it!"

The red man laid aside the guitar, and replied, with a suave gesture:

"I have bored the ladies quite long enough. Some of these little tunes of mine interested the dean of the Yale Music School when we met at a reception not long ago. They are a sort of hobby with me, vanishing songs of a vanished people."

"I am so hoping that Mr. Colorado will permit me to announce a recital in New York," eagerly exclaimed the chaperon. "Of course he never wears native costume, but it would be so much more effective——"

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"He is extremely effective in football costume," artlessly interjected Kitty, at which Varney glowered so ferociously that she feared she had made a blunder. Heavens, thought she, if they couldn't talk football, what on earth would be a safe topic to draw Mr. Varney into the conversation? Of course he must be a very capable young man, but she had never in her life met any one who was so economical with language. A happy inspiration came to her, and she turned to him to say:

"Do you know, I had the honor of an introduction to your father, General Varney, on my way East. An uncle of mine met me in Chicago and took me out to luncheon. General Varney was at another table, and he came over and had coffee with us, and my uncle and they smoked perfectly tremendous cigars and talked so hard that I couldn't get in a word edge-wise. They have been friends for years and years."

Fred Varney was no longer morose. His face glowed with feeling. Pride and affection were uppermost as he exclaimed:

"The kindest, bravest man God ever made! Why, this is like getting a letter from home, Miss Lombard. Was he looking well? He was feeble when I left home in September."

"He seemed quite lame, but in the best of spirits. I thought he was a perfect old dear. I quite lost my heart to him. Such a distinguished appearance, the beau-ideal of a soldier."

Antonio Colorado sat very straight in his chair,

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outwardly composed, punctiliously attentive. His fortitude was akin to that of his forebears when tortured at the stake. Once or twice his straight lips quivered and his strong fingers stirred restlessly. The chaperon prattled in his ear, and he answered mechanically, but his eyes never once wandered from the face of Fred Varney. The girl, so tragically innocent of what her words conveyed to Antonio, was saying:

"I was dying to hear some of his yarns of service on the frontier, but my uncle gave me no chance. I suppose you have heard them all, Mr. Varney."

"They used to scare me half to death when I was a little shaver," replied the football captain. He glanced at Antonio, perceiving that at this rate they would be discussing things which had better be avoided. General Varney had won his reputation as an Indian fighter. The impetuous Kitty was not warned in time. Somehow it did not occur to her that Antonio Colorado might find the subject painful. He had impressed her as so much more the Yale man and the gentleman than as the Sioux that she could not realize that his own father's generation had defied the United States army. Heedlessly she hurried the situation toward the climax by exclaiming:

"My uncle told me that General Varney won the Congressional Medal of Honor when he was a captain of cavalry. It was for valor at the battle of Wounded Knee——"

In his chair, Antonio Colorado suddenly strained forward, his hands clinched, and he uttered a sound

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like a smothered sob. For an instant his face blazed with passion. He had ceased to be the careless Sophomore, the gay troubadour, the finished product, and was the red Sioux, the son of a chief who rode with Sitting Bull. The revelation was momentary, however, and as though he had bethought himself of his duty to the girl whose guest he was, he held himself in hand. Making an excuse, he said his adieus, carrying it off with an air of quiet self-possession.

Kitty was contrite and somewhat puzzled, declaring that she should have known better than to drag in General Varney, for, of course, Mr. Antonio Colorado would naturally side with the Indians. For a second she had thought he was about to bound up in the air and emit a blood-curdling war-whoop. His expression made her shudder. The chaperon had been deliciously thrilled. She did not wish her Indians to be too tame. This fascinating specimen had an elemental streak in him, after all. Fred Varney had no comment to offer, and Bob Sedgwick wisely held his peace.

The ladies were disappointed when Antonio came no more to the hotel nor was visible on the campus. They went out to the football-field and watched the practice, beholding him in action. Fred Varney found time to join them between the periods of play, but the Indian stayed with his battered comrades. Miss Kitty was piqued. She was not accustomed to being avoided in this pointed manner. The truth was that two different motives accounted for the behavior of Antonio. He had conceived a great admiration for the girl, and he

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dared not let himself get in any deeper. She was not for a man of his race. The barrier was impassable. Besides this, he was unwilling to risk another encounter with Fred Varney in her presence. Jealousy had added inflammable fuel to the feud.

Bob Sedgwick learned with interest that Kitty planned to return to New Haven for the Princeton game. Her uncle was a rabid alumnus of old Yale, and he found a plausible pretext for a business trip to New York every autumn. Now Llewellyn Chalmers Jordan would have begged her on bended knee to go to the game with him, but he had completely lost his nerve after being routed by Antonio and the guitar, and he moped so disconsolately that his roommate threatened to get a divorce.

This game with Princeton was one of the last great contests played on the old Yale field before that mighty concrete amphitheatre called The Bowl was built to match the enduring architecture of Rome. Around the white-lined quadrangle of turf were terraced the huge wooden stands upon which thirty thousand people massed themselves to prove that football was the most popular course in the college curriculum. The sons of old Nassau came like an army with banners, confident that this was Princeton's year. Fred Varney, veteran of three seasons' campaigns, expressed no opinion when the Yale coaches became optimistic. So far as he was concerned, it was all in the day's work.

His father had made up his mind to see the game, after another genial session in Chicago with Miss

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Kitty's uncle, whose enthusiasm was irresistible. These elderly chums made the journey together, and found Kitty in New York, a loyal Yale girl whose violets and blue ribbons flaunted her allegiance. It was a jolly party of three that survived the crush and tumult of the journey to the Yale field.

The Princeton strategy was built around a dashing programme of end runs and forward passes because the rush-line was not heavy enough for a consistent attack. It was soon apparent that the most vital factors of the Yale defense were Captain Varney and Antonio Colorado. They were so splendidly fitted for the task, however, that there was little uneasiness among the Yale cohorts, who considered the Princeton policy futile.

Opposed to Antonio was a slashing chap of a hundred and ninety pounds, uncommonly heavy for an end rush, but quick and viciously aggressive. In burly strength he overmatched Antonio, but the Indian managed to outwit him until there came another Princeton attempt at an end run. It formed behind beautifully organized interference and surged toward the vigilant Antonio, who coolly waited his chance to sift through and drag the runner down. At the critical instant, his opponent, failing to thwart him by fair means, caught him by one arm and jerked him to the ground. It was a flagrant violation of the rules, but in the confusion the officials failed to observe it.

Unchecked, therefore, the Princeton half-back skirted the end of the Yale line, and his interference,

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in full stride, swung in a long slant toward the goal. Two Yale men, the last outposts of defense, failed to smash through and halt the ball. A wonderfully spectacular forty-yard dash, and Princeton had scored the first points of the game. Fred Varney, picking himself up from where he had been flung, walked over to Antonio and said in a low voice whose accents were unsteady:

“You did that, you hound! You’re afraid of that big Princeton end. Lay down again and I’ll kick you out of the game. I always thought you had a yellow streak.”

“He held me. You didn’t happen to see it,” was the reply, spoken with an air of brooding detachment, as though insults in an hour like this were too trivial to notice. The players were mere cogs of the football machine. Varney bit his lip, stood gazing at the ground for a moment, and moved away, his demeanor suggesting that he was not wholly pleased with himself.

His dogged, unbeatable spirit now set in motion a Yale assault which carried the ball forward in short rushes, like the incessant blows of a battering-ram. Princeton fell back unbroken, fighting over every foot of turf, until the shadow of the goal-posts fell across the conflict. Swaying and interlocked, the rush lines struggled until the final Yale thrust gained the few inches needed, and the touch-down was achieved.

It was at great cost, for when the heap of men was disentangled, Fred Varney was pulled out with a

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twisted ankle. He thrust aside the comrades who held him up, and tried to hobble to his place, but the effort was pitiful. He sank down, and realized that he must be taken out of the game. He beckoned Bob Sedgwick, who was to act as captain in his stead, and gave him a few instructions. A substitute flung aside a blanket and scampered from the side-line. Varney was made comfortable on a bench among the coaches, and the game went on without him.

After two periods had been played, the score remained a tie. During the intermission the rival multitudes hurled songs and cheers across the field. By way of refreshment, cigars and cigarettes were lighted, although warning signs were posted everywhere, and uniformed firemen patrolled the inflammable wooden stands. It was a well-bred, intelligent American crowd, characteristically lawless, and disregarding danger. Good fortune had averted disaster heretofore, and the anxious management could only pray for the continued favor of the gods.

Somebody dropped the stub of a cigarette from his fingers, and assumed that it fell to the ground through an open space between the rows of plank seats. It lodged in a crumpled newspaper, however, and a small flame licked the splintered end of a dry pine joist. A snap and crackle and the hungry blaze ran to another timber, and so was fairly under way among the underpinning and braces of the towering stand. The draught carried the blue smoke upward. The panic was what might have been expected.

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Caught in the very vortex of this human whirlpool and directly above the stifling conflagration were Kitty Lombard and her uncle and General Varney. Of these, the old soldier deserved the most compassion, for he was too infirm to escape unless aided. The dauntless girl refused to leave him, and besought her neighbors to lend a hand while her uncle tried to shield her from being trampled underfoot in the frantic exodus. In this brief interval of delay, these three were a little isolated, enough to be recognizable from the football-field, and their pitiful dilemma comprehended.

Even before he saw them, Fred Varney made a desperate attempt to hobble toward the burning stand, but his twisted ankle let him down and other men stumbled over him. It was Antonio Colorado who moved faster than any of his comrades. They were brave and willing, but seemed bedazed. He was not so much an athlete in full speed as a human projectile which ripped through the mob or ricocheted over it. He took the outer railing without touching it, seemed to shoot at full length on the top of convenient heads and shoulders, dived and came up again, rammed a passage for a few feet, and got his hands on the wooden barricade in front of the lowest row of seats. Here, he found a cleared space where the timbers burned furiously and the smoke was a choking fog. He swerved not, but climbed straight ahead. The plank-ing gave way, but he caught and swung and hauled himself out of the hole.

A few yards more and in the smoke he found those

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whom he sought. Was it his intention to save the girl, and so satisfy the demands of romance? No, for she was young and vigorous, and could easily escape if unimpeded. Gruffly he commanded her uncle to take her beyond reach of the fire and wait until the crowd thinned or came to its senses. General Varney sat erect, his two hands clasped upon the head of his cane. He was facing his finish like a soldier. Antonio seemed to swoop down at him. A heave and a swing, and the Indian was carrying Fred Varney's father upon his back.

Bent beneath the burden, but sure and supple of movement, Antonio clambered to the higher rows of seats where the wind blew the smoke aside and the structure was still strong. Barely had he quitted the place where he had found General Varney than it collapsed with a shower of sparks and embers, and the gap disclosed a sheer drop of twenty feet into a fiery furnace. Slowly Antonio picked his way along the uppermost tier until he was able to descend without risk. Both football teams had charged the crowd in a flying wedge, and were hauling out those who needed help. The police were getting the upper hand of the panic, and the firemen were able to prevent the blaze from spreading to the adjoining sections of the stand.

The multitude had flowed out on the playing-field as a torrent floods over a dam. Wild rumor asserted that dozens of men and women had lost their lives. This was untrue, but there were broken legs and arms,

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contusions and nervous shocks to keep the ambulances busy, and there was no thought of resuming the football game. By the time the field was cleared and the injured removed, the autumn afternoon was waning toward twilight. By mutual consent, Yale and Princeton called the contest a drawn battle.

Bob Sedgwick sent General Varney and his son into New Haven together, one of the coaches who was a physician riding with them and promising to see that every attention was given them at the hotel. Miss Kitty was unharmed, and insisted on waiting until she could interview her cousin Bob.

"Mr. Antonio Colorado didn't even take the trouble to find out whether I am alive or dead," said she. "He just shooed me away and grabbed poor General Varney. Don't you suppose he intends to call before I leave town to-morrow?"

"You guess wrong, Kitty," answered Bob. "He ran around like a lunatic until he got a glimpse of you out here on the field, all right and smiling. As for calling on you, I'm afraid Antonio doesn't feel fit. He burned his hands and barked his shins, and his pipes are full of smoke. He was all in when he dragged himself to the dressing-room. However, I'll deliver your message. Peeved because he didn't play you as the heroine?"

"Of course not," flashed Kitty. "How dare you! It was the finest deed I ever saw in my life. But—but I can't help wishing he wasn't a Sioux."

"Hum-m! So that's the trouble? If you don't

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see Antonio again, maybe you have named the reason. Perhaps he has been thinking the same thing."

When Sedgwick entered the dressing-room, Antonio sat on a bench in his football clothes. His attitude was dejected and weary, his expression haggard. Sedgwick laid a hand on his shoulder and warmly exclaimed:

"The game was a tie, but you win! How you could forgive and forget is beyond me."

The Sioux raised his head, and his countenance was illumined by some profound emotion beyond the ken of the unimaginative Anglo-Saxon.

"It may have been my idea of revenge. They say the Indian's mind moves in crooked paths," said Antonio Colorado, and his voice was full and deep; "or possibly the Christ that your race has discarded as a living presence may have spoken His message to the heart of a Sioux."

"You have shown me what it is to be a Christian gentleman and a Yale man," replied Sedgwick, who was somewhat awed. "You will give Fred Varney a chance to apologize, won't you, Antonio? He is simply broken-hearted over the way he used you. He begged me to tell you so when I lifted him into a car."

"I will see him—after his father goes," said the Indian. "I am inclined to think there will be no more trouble between us. My own grudge was wiped clean this afternoon, and the old account is squared."

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WHEN a young man has been three years out of Yale he hearkens to the call that summons him back to the campus for a reunion of his class. This Triennial of his is not a sedate affair. At five and twenty years he is a long way from the dignified jog-trot of middle age, and although the harsh, unfeeling world has dealt him many an uppercut, it has not tamed his exuberance. During these festive occasions it is customary for him to wear a uniform, distinctive and fantastic.

The reunion committee of a certain class had decreed that its celebrants should be arrayed as Indians, after a fierce discussion, in which a minority favored either kilted Highlanders or jockeys bestriding little wooden hobby-horses. It, therefore, so happened that commencement week at New Haven was enlivened by the antics of two hundred braves in feathered head-dresses, beaded shirts, fringed trousers of imitation buckskin, and yellow moccasins. They waved their tomahawks, danced on the green, paraded frequently, and uttered shrill and frenzied war-whoops at all hours of the night and day. A private dormitory had been rented as headquarters, and in the yard were pitched several teepees, where black slaves in white jackets served the more convivial warriors of the tribe with a

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cold brew from the keg, or filled long glasses with ice, soda, and fire-water. For the most part, however, these were good Indians, whose behavior caused no alarm among the palefaces.

Of the throng which filled the campus, no one was more amused by this particular exhibit than the Sophomore Antonio Colorado, the Sioux. His college friends had ceased to regard him as a novelty. He belonged with them and had been welcomed into the best crowd. As an end rusher of the varsity eleven, worthy to be coupled with Captain Fred Varney, Antonio had proved his strength and courage.

It was on the day of the baseball game with Harvard, high-tide of the class reunions, that the brass bands led the cohorts into line for the procession to the Yale Field. Returning classes, slightly older than the prancing Indians, were gayly costumed as navy jackies or circus clowns or knights in pasteboard armor. It was a large, delirious pageant, all color and movement and high spirits, flowing and swirling into Chapel Street, and past the campus, with a most prodigious racket. A foreign observer might have been puzzled to comprehend what it had to do with a university education.

Bob Sedgwick had invited his charming cousin to come on for this commencement baseball game, and Miss Kitty Lombard accepted with alacrity. The fact that she had previously met Mr. Antonio Colorado, and considered him an uncommonly fascinating man, of course had nothing to do with the case. It was

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worth noting, however, that Miss Kitty was no more than in the hotel when the card of Antonio was promptly followed by that grave, graceful young man himself. He tarried for dinner, and was asked to join the party for the game next day.

They walked across the street to see the procession before driving out to the field. Standing at the curb, they watched the two hundred counterfeit Indians disport themselves while waiting their turn to march. Miss Lombard laughed, appeared a trifle anxious, and looked up at her companion, who happened to be Antonio, the Sioux. He read her mind and said, with a smile:

“It doesn’t jar my emotions in the least to see the noble red man caricatured. I enjoy the fun as much as you do. I was snatched away from my people as an infant, you know, and I’ve never been West since then.”

“And you wouldn’t be able to talk to another Sioux in his own tongue? How queer that seems, Mr. Colorado!”

“Not a blessed word, Miss Lombard. School and college, and knocking about Europe with my benefactor, the man who took me into his own family, and has done everything in the world for me—that has been the programme.”

“So you haven’t heard the call of the wild?” said the interested girl.

“Nothing wilder than a camp in the Maine woods and a jaunt through Mexico.”

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With yelps and piercing war-whoops the Triennial Indians ceased their snake-dance and formed in column to hit the trail to the baseball-field. The tallest man carried a banner emblazoned with the class numerals. Flanking him were the members of the reunion committee, the big chiefs and medicine-men. One of these may have tarried too long in a teepee and crooked a finger too often at a black slave in a white jacket, or perhaps it was merely an excess of carnival enthusiasm which inspired his conduct. He was a fellow of tremendous bulk, champion hammer-thrower while in college, and his friends were hailing him as "Tiny Tim" Jennings. Passing the Chapel Street corner, he caught sight of Antonio Colorado at the curb, and roared in jubilant accents:

"Yi-yi-yi! The real thing! The last of the Mohicans, as I live! Does he belong to us? Must we have him?"

With this the impetuous Jennings made a lumbering dash to the curb and laid violent hands upon his prize. Antonio expostulated, pleasantly for a moment, and Bob Sedgwick stepped forward to interfere. There was such a thing as carrying horse-play too far. Tiny Tim was in an unreasoning humor, however, and had determined to kidnap this genuine child of the prairie and parade him in front of the banner. Deaf to all objection, he loudly declaimed:

"You are surely elected, Chingacook, my boy. Be a heap good sport. You've got to come, so nix on the trouble stuff."

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The procession had halted, and the feathered braves began to edge over to the scene of disturbance. They were charmed with the idea, and agreed that Jennings had a brilliant mind. All they needed was an eighteen-carat Indian in the van. One of the crowd had dropped out because his shoes hurt him, and he hurriedly stripped off his costume, shouting:

“Here you are, Tim. Shoot him into my regalia. Say, will he look the part? Oh, don’t stop to argue. Fetch him along.”

The temper of Antonio flared with no more provocation. Mindful of Kitty Lombard, he asked Sedgwick to escort her to the field without waiting for him. He hoped to join them a little later. Kitty moved away reluctantly, turning to glance back at the jostling mob which surrounded Antonio. They were uproariously good-natured, and many of them were ready to desist, now that it was seen that the gentlemanly Sioux took the matter seriously. Jennings and several of his cronies were stubborn, however, and with one accord these suddenly closed in and grabbed Antonio, trying to hustle him into the street.

Twisting free, he let drive with both fists. The episode failed to amuse him. His knuckles smote the nose of Tiny Tim and closed one eye of another warrior. This naturally annoyed them, and they led another charge at close quarters, fairly smothering the hapless Antonio by sheer weight of numbers. He was shoved and hauled and pushed into the street, and compelled to take the position assigned him by the

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jocular Mr. Jennings. The band struck up a crashing one-step, the column yip-yipped with all its lung power, and the aborigines swept onward.

Closely guarded was the precious prisoner, a stalwart man clutching each arm, another just ahead, and a fourth at his heels. He realized that it would be silly to resist any further and compel them to drag him. He made the best of it, therefore, silent, unsmiling, inscrutable. In his heart was anger that smouldered and glowed. His clothes were torn, rumped, and dusty as a result of the rumpus. A red scratch crossed his cheek. He could not rejoin Bob Sedgwick's party in this sorry plight. His pride stood in the way. The afternoon was spoiled for him. He was chewing on such thoughts as these when Jennings slapped him on the back and cried:

"Buck up, old chap, and act like one of the party. This is our mad, merry day, and everything goes. Off with the grouch! Forgive us for putting up this little game on you."

Beneath the mask of dignified composure, the emotions of Antonio were primitive. He had reverted to type, but this was not for these ill-mannered roisterers to know. With a shrug he replied:

"I may as well stay with your crowd for a while. I seem to be outvoted."

"Of course you were, but you put up a mighty nice little scrap. Stick with us and be our guest at the class dinner to-night. We are positively the brightest, most entertaining bunch that ever graduated from Mr. Elihu Yale's college."

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"I have a previous engagement, if you will be kind enough to excuse me before then," said the Sioux, and he spoke with a certain grimness of inflection which Jennings failed to note.

A man behind him clapped a feathered bonnet on the head of Antonio, and another threw a bright blanket across his shoulders. The effect was almost a transformation. Instead of the cultivated Sophomore one seemed to behold the splendid savage whose fitting environment was very different from this. He had always walked with the gait of an Indian, it was the one outward trait inherited from his fathers, and now he appeared as though on a hostile trail.

Into the Yale Field romped the Triennial phalanx to join the various other contingents of costumed lunatics in a grand circuit of the baseball diamond, past the crowded grand-stands, a dozen brass bands going it like mad on a dozen tunes at once. Kitty Lombard leaned forward to wave a blue flag, but Antonio Colorado made no sign of recognition as he strode by. The girl was hurt, and showed it as she said to Bob Sedgwick:

"But isn't he going to sit with us? He certainly didn't behave as if he preferred the company of those crazy Indians."

"They mussed him up and injured his sensitive feelings," answered her cousin. "And, besides, he was captured and rough-housed right before your eyes, Kitty. A shameful performance, says Antonio to himself, and he will be unworthy to meet the fair young squaw again until the scalps of his enemies

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dangle from his belt. And, believe me, he will get square with that big bully, Tiny Tim Jennings, before the next moon. Antonio is seldom riled, but when they get him well started, he is undoubtedly a bear."

"He looks angry now, Bob, and in those trappings he is every inch a Sioux, isn't he? He won't shoot or stab that horrid Jennings person, will he? Mr. Colorado is so awfully well bred and civilized, and yet you never can tell."

"Piffle!" was the rude comment. "Antonio isn't the sort to jump the reservation. He is white clean through. Leave it to him and don't worry. That noisy Jennings is due to have a crimp put in him. He is a public nuisance."

Miss Kitty wore a serious, rather absent, expression, and her gaze wandered from the diamond to the tier of seats across the field where the cheering "Indians" made a great splotch of bright color. The girl observed that Antonio Colorado sat still as a statue, oblivious of the excitement around him. The Yale and Harvard nines scampered across the smooth turf in preliminary practice, and soon the game began, every moment tense. From the first inning it was cleanly played and sharply fought. The score seesawed until the very end, and then the Yale short-stop banged out a home run and decided the issue in favor of the blue.

Into the field swept a human landslide, frenzied undergraduates, and young alumni, who surged at the victors to hoist them aloft and carry them in triumph around the enclosure. Foremost among these ardent

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partisans was Tiny Tim Jennings, followed by many of his comrades. Antonio Colorado was forgotten, and he lost no time in escaping. Drifting with the crowd toward the gate, he gained the street, and so made his way into New Haven on foot.

While passing a vacant lot he halted to study a huge poster. In striking colors it depicted scenes and episodes of the vanished American frontier, reckless cowboys cavorting on bucking broncos, or whirling their ropes at long-horned Texas steers; the pony-express rider galloping over the plains amid showers of hostile arrows; the Overland stage, with its shotgun guard; the caravan of canvas-topped prairie-schooners attacked by the demon redskins. Antonio stood regarding this thrilling bill-board with critical interest. It seemed to fascinate him. Presently his sedate features lighted in a slow smile. As he turned away he actually chuckled aloud. This was proof that the Sioux possesses a certain sense of humor.

At supper Antonio was absent from his eating club, nor in the evening did he present himself at the hotel to enjoy the vivacious society of Miss Kitty Lombard. He ate alone in a restaurant, smoked one meditative cigar, and sought a garage. There he hired for the night a powerful seven-passenger car, with a lean young driver whom nothing could dismay. The solitary Antonio lounged in the tonneau while the machine departed swiftly from New Haven and fled over the highway to the westward. Less than an hour, and it rolled into Bridgeport. The driver halted to get in-

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formation from a policeman, and turned toward one of the suburbs.

The big tents of The Triangle Wild West Show were brightly illuminated. The performance had begun when Antonio bought a reserved seat and sauntered in to watch the entertainment. His interest quickened when the Indians came on to ambush the mail-coach. These were no Triennial-Reunion counterfeits, but picked riders and hunters from the virile tribes which still resist the white man's endeavors to improve them off the face of the earth. Antonio could identify the Sioux, and he counted them carefully. An even dozen, including an elderly chief, scowling, pock-marked, brawny, who looked as if he might hark back to the days of Sitting Bull and the last fight at Wounded Knee.

A most infernal racket, fusillades of blank cartridges, and the Overland stage was in a predicament indeed, but a dusty troop of Uncle Sam's cavalry arrived in the nick of time, and drove the baffled redskins back to the mountains. As soon as they retreated, and the dead and wounded had revived and trotted off, Antonio Colorado left his seat and walked behind the painted scenery which screened the smaller living tents. Inquiry directed him to an interpreter, a grizzled, bow-legged terrier of a man who had been a scout with Buffalo Bill and General Miles. His greeting was cordial, and he gave his name as "Curly Tom" Bridges, informing Antonio:

"I know all about you, young man. Once on a

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time I was stationed at the Pine Ridge Agency, and the story was told me by the army people. You're the papoose that was pulled out of the bloody ruction on the creek, and taken to camp across a cavalry saddle."

"Correct so far, as it was explained to me later," smiled Antonio, "but how have you managed to keep track of me since those days?"

The interpreter jerked his thumb in the direction of the nearest tent, in the door of which lounged a Sioux bedaubed with war-paint.

"Your own blood—they never lost you for a minute," was the reply. "There was always somebody from the agency, or an army officer, or a rancher bound East on a trip, and as sure as guns there were Indians begging 'em to bring back word of the famous papoose. Proud as Tophet, too—they figgered it was an honor to the tribe—you'd hooked up to a millionaire or something, and was getting plumb full up of gilt-edged refinements and education and all such nonsense."

"And they never thought of me as a renegade who had turned his back on his own folks?" queried Antonio.

"Nary a mite of it. Say, they'll be tickled to death to see you. The old chief, Hole in the Clouds, brags that he's some kind of kin of yours. It frames up that your father and him were cousins, as near as I can make it. So you're in New Haven? We play the town day after to-morrow."

"The college will be closed by then, Mr. Bridges. Too bad, isn't it? That is one reason why I came to

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Bridgeport to-night. I didn't want to miss the show."

"Well, we can pull off a little reception right now," exclaimed Curly Tom, "and you're welcome to pow-wow with the outfit till daylight, if you like. Come along with me."

He led the way into the Sioux tent and told the group who the visitor was. The dozen Indians displayed unwonted excitement, crowding around Antonio to shake his hand, to pat his shoulders, to scrutinize him by the light of the gasolene-torches, while they talked among themselves, or addressed him earnestly in their own tongue. He had to turn to the interpreter for help, saying:

"Please tell them I am ashamed of myself that I never took the trouble to learn some words of the Sioux language."

Old Hole in the Clouds moved closer. Age had bent his broad shoulders, and his dark, harsh face was incredibly seamed and cross-hatched with wrinkles. His sight was failing, and he peered long at the young man before he grunted in English:

"Heap good boy! Come see your friends?"

Antonio nodded, and his smile was a trifle uncertain with feeling. His life, his tastes, his ambitions had nothing whatever in common with these untutored Sioux from the Dakotas, and yet the mystic ties of birth were not to be disregarded. He was granted no time for self-analysis, however, for the younger men plied him with questions. They were moved by curi-

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osity, friendly but insatiable. This visitor of their own tribe had dropped from another world. He was fabulous, in a way, and had to be explained. By means of Curly Tom Bridges, he was able to enlighten them concerning his career and prospects, and their demeanor was that of sober congratulation, never a trace of envy or resentment.

"I should like permission to take them all to New Haven with me to-night," said Antonio, recalling his errand. "It is a short run by motor, and I promise to return them at a fairly decent hour. They might enjoy a glimpse of the college buildings, and supper with me."

"It sounds good enough to me," answered Bridges. "We'll have a chat with the boss. He'll size you up as a responsible, all-right party, and he knows who you are."

"You are invited, of course," returned Antonio. "Now, if the boss consents, can we handle the crowd with no chance of trouble? They will take orders from you?"

"Not a drunkard in the outfit," was the prompt response. "We picked 'em special. As for obeying orders, you're their little tin god on wheels already. Between the two of us, they'll be as easy as lambs. And I'll bet the cigars that for manners and morals they will stack up against some of the bunches of college boys that have strayed into the big tent."

"You win," said Antonio. "Here is the proposition for you to put up to Hole in the Clouds and the

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others. This little trip is not to be all amusement. This afternoon I was insulted and humiliated and jumped on by a crowd of men who should have known better. I am enough of an Indian to want to square the account."

The interpreter looked dubious and hesitated before he replied: "These Sioux of ours would naturally love nothing better than to rollick into a rumpus by way of doing you a favor, but the boss wouldn't stand for it. And I suppose they have policemen and lockups in New Haven. You get me, don't you?"

"Certainly, Mr. Bridges. I give you my word that the trick can be turned without the slightest disorder."

"Then we won't mention this little matter to the boss. Now let me pass it along to these fellow citizens of yours."

He raised his hand and the low murmur of voices became silent. In florid phrases befitting this important occasion, he informed the group of the desire of the distinguished Antonio Colorado to waft them to New Haven in automobiles, as his particular friends and honored guests. Certain white men had been guilty of cowardly behavior toward their host. These men were curs, who deserved a beating. It was necessary to punish them in another way, however, which would be explained at the proper time. There was to be no fighting, and Hole in the Cloud would give the assurance of a chief whose word was never broken that his young men should do as they were told.

This announcement caused a sensation. Antonio

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noted one or two Sioux edging toward the rifles which were stacked around the centre pole of the tent, but Hole in the Clouds rebuked them, and they halted in their tracks. It was apparent that Antonio's grievance was taken very weightily, and he felt some slight misgivings. Loyalty might be too zealous. As a precautionary measure, Curly Tom Bridges searched the party for weapons, and confiscated the very last pocket-knife.

A pleasant interview with the owner of the Triangle Wild West Show, and permission was obtained. The personality of Antonio was uncommonly impressive. He made one more stipulation, that the Sioux should not change their clothes, as some of them were inclined to do, but should remain in the gorgeous panoply of feathers, beads, buckskin, and paint, which had made them a spectacle so ferocious in the mimic frays of the big tent. With native courtesy they humored his whim and offered no objection.

Explaining that he wished the party to ride comfortably, he telephoned a Bridgeport garage for two more large automobiles. At eleven o'clock the show had finished its evening performance, and a few minutes thereafter the personally conducted expedition of Antonio Colorado was rolling toward New Haven. He sat with Tom Bridges, and outlined his scheme of vengeance. It vastly amused the interpreter, and he offered to co-operate "plumb up to the handle."

"They sure dealt it to you raw," said he. "And you riding herd on this lovely young girl, Miss Lom-

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bard! From Nebraska, is she—related to the Sedgwicks? Pshaw! I know that outfit—mines and cattle. I've got a boy of my own that was foreman for a Lombard ranch."

Antonio made no comment. It was a delicate theme, and he cared to discuss it no further. Probably his companion was puzzled that the daughter of Willoughby Lombard should be an acquaintance of this educated Sioux. It failed to square with the social code of the frontier. With nice tact, Curly Tom talked of other things, perceiving that Antonio's mood had become sombre.

Meanwhile that glorious class of Yale which was celebrating its Triennial Reunion had marched in from the field, making a *détour* past the house of the president of the university in order to cheer for him and listen to his words of welcome delivered from the piazza. Thence they returned to headquarters, and a respite in the teepees from their strenuous programme. At seven o'clock they mobilized again for the class dinner, the chief event, which was held in a hall a short distance from the campus. It was an informal affair, so far as dress was concerned, and many of them bothered not to discard the costume of the parade.

The brass band had been reinforced by a fife-and-drum corps, in order that the music should not cease for lack of breath. The caterer had been instructed to guard against a drought. The menu was elaborate, and the list of speakers carefully chosen. The finest

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class that ever left the campus was prepared to make a night of it. The toastmaster was Tiny Tim Jennings, who had a rough-and-ready wit and a self-assurance that nothing could upset. It was late in the evening before he introduced the first orator. The dinner was prolonged by frequent interruptions. Between courses, the entire company insisted on promenading around the hall behind the fife-and-drum corps. There was also a great deal of chorus-singing, and one "Spike" Strothers had to be indulged in his well-known stunt of leading the band with a flag for a baton.

When the burly toastmaster took charge of the proceedings, it was seen that he was in splendid form. His remarks had the snap and ginger to carry things along with unflagging spirit. He set the pace for the other speakers, and they did so well that there was a loud demand for more eloquence after the prearranged list was exhausted. Jennings, therefore, called upon this man and that, and the interest had not begun to slacken when the hour drew toward midnight. Jennings was compelled to relate the story of the twin sons of his brother, who had been graduated several years earlier. It was always good for a tremendous laugh. He rose to his feet and began to speak as follows:

"It doesn't take them long to show the true Yale spirit in my family. These remarkable twins were only a few hours old, do you see, and the nurse had put them together in the same cradle. She didn't

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want to get them mixed, and, in order to tell one from the other, she tied ribbons on them. A blue ribbon on one twin, a red ribbon on the other one. The lad with the blue ribbon turned and squirmed until he caught sight of his infant brother, who was decorated with the hateful color of perfidious Harvard. And what did he do then, my dear classmates? Why, he let out a yell, doubled his fist, hauled off, and lammed the twin with the red ribbon for all he was worth. It was a case of separating the twins or changing colors. Nothing doing at all. My brother was deeply affected, and——”

Here the toastmaster paused until the applause should become less vociferous. Suddenly the grin faded from his large countenance, his eyes were fixed on the doorway, and they seemed to be popping from his head. He stood frozen, immovable. The audience stared at him with idle curiosity for a moment, expecting some merry jest, but his amazement seemed so genuine that there was a scraping of chairs, and they turned to face the doorway.

Without a sound, fourteen unbidden guests had entered the hall. Antonio Colorado and Curly Tom Bridges had purposely stayed in the rear, so that for the moment they were hidden behind Hole in the Clouds' band of Sioux, in their forbidding garb and lavish war-paint. There was no mistaking these intruders for Reunion masqueraders. Scowling to right and left of the terrific old chief were such truculent followers as Leaping Wolf, Running Water, John

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Hungry, and Man with the Sharp Knives. As a tableau they were more than sensational. Again the chairs scraped, this time very nervously, and several young men, with a hunted air, let their glances rove in the direction of the nearest windows. Tiny Tim Jennings, rattled for once, uttered a long sigh, which sounded like a porpoise coming up to breathe, and dropped into his chair with a thump.

The shock of the unexpected had benumbed the wits of this festive dinner. It may have occurred to a few to connect this invasion with the Triangle Wild West Show and Bridgeport, but this did not help matters. To most of them, including the crumpled toastmaster, these red Indians were inexplicable, and their errand was unfriendly. Before the panic-smitten gathering could recover and attempt any concerted action, Antonio Colorado stepped forward, an easy, dignified director of ceremonies. Jennings had a glimmer of comprehension, but he could find nothing to say.

During the next three minutes events moved with extraordinary rapidity and precision. Antonio pointed a finger at the toastmaster. Old Hole in the Clouds and young Leaping Wolf moved forward between the long tables at a swift lope. They seemed to arrive instantaneously. Out of his chair they snatched the mighty Jennings, and he moved toward the door, a sinewy hand gripping the back of his neck, his arms pinioned, a knee propelling him when he lagged. Thus might two expert truckmen shoot a cotton bale out of a warehouse.

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No sooner had the luckless toastmaster been set in motion than Antonio's gesture indicated another member of the class committee. Man with the Sharp Knives bounded over the table, alighted upon his designated victim, and hustled and dragged him in the wake of Mr. Jennings. Another signal from the fatal finger of Antonio, and a third ringleader was whisked into outer darkness. After that, the process was speeded up until seven of the glorious class of Umpty-six had been hurled at the waiting automobiles. They fairly flew out of the hall before any attempt at rescue could be organized. Antonio had selected those who had been most conspicuous in ruffling his clothes and his self-respect. The others sat and looked on in a dazed manner, as though wondering who was next on the list. Their emotions were more or less scrambled. It had been a frightful mistake to dress up as Indians for the Reunion.

Curly Tom Bridges had stood aside, his thumbs in his belt, laughing himself red in the face. In a corner he spied a heap of fireworks, intended for use on the campus in the small hours of morning, and he suggested to Antonio:

"Better fetch the stuff along, had I? It'll please the Sioux a whole lot, and I figger we can add some pep to the grand finale."

The seven prisoners were tossed into the three automobiles, head over heels, and their captors kept them quiet by the simple expedient of using them for cushions. Old Hole in the Clouds sat upon Tiny Tim Jen-

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nings in the bottom of the tonneau, and poked him in the stomach when he became troublesome.

"The old boy showed me a string of scalps several years ago," casually remarked the interpreter. "He had kept 'em hidden away all those years. Mebbe he has 'em yet. He was sure a bad Indian when he was young and frisky. Better watch him, Antonio. First thing you know, he's liable to be feeling around for the hair of this ornery Jennings party."

"It may be difficult to manage these friends of mine," solemnly replied Antonio. "They are pretty well worked up, of course, and they regard me as one of their tribe who has been mistreated."

A muffled groan was heard from the bottom of the tonneau, where Mr. Jennings was endeavoring to hold fast to his hair against a sudden onslaught. A policeman or two saw the automobiles flit past the street lights, but feeble yelps for help failed to attract their attention. They noticed the feathered war-bonnets, and took it for granted that the Triennial celebrants had embarked for a joy ride.

The destination was the Yale Field, now lonely and deserted, the baseball diamond, enclosed by the circling grand-stand, lying far back from the road and the gateways. It was an isolated place, fit for deeds of darkness, and interference was most unlikely. Once inside the grounds, the headlights flashed on a pile of discarded lumber, of which Antonio made mental note. The cars halted and the forlorn captives were pulled out, by a leg, an arm, or a collar, as came handiest.

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Curly Tom Bridges had borrowed an axe and several coils of rope from one of the tents. He deftly tied the prisoners together for safe-keeping, knotting them in a compact little bunch until the preparations were completed.

On a spot of bare ground a fire was built and lighted. Its shadowy illumination disclosed the dusky figures of the Sioux captors flitting to and fro. Their aspect was sinister, uncanny in the extreme, as though there was no make-believe whatever about this business. So keen was their zest in their midnight outing, that Antonio Colorado felt slightly uneasy. The aged Hole in the Clouds was renewing his youth. His bent figure straightened, and he glided with agile footstep, muttering to himself in a singsong, droning voice which sounded very much like a battle-hymn. Leaping Wolf was aptly named, for he ran in bounding circles and barked ferociously.

During a brief lull, the unfortunate Jennings managed to make himself heard in a tremulous appeal to Antonio:

"I say, old man, this is carrying a joke rather far. It was thoughtless of us to steal you for our parade, but we meant it in fun. If you had put some of your college pals up to playing horse with us to-night, it would be tit for tat. But these confounded Indians of yours don't know when to stop."

"You grabbed *me* because I am an Indian," replied the implacable Antonio, "so I'm afraid you will have to stand my way of getting even. If you fellows try

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to raise a shout for help I'll gag you with strips of your own shirts. Civilization is only skin-deep with a Sioux. You have rubbed the veneer off me."

"The bunch is buffaloed, all right," whispered Bridges. "Darned if this circus isn't enough to make you feel creepy. Look at Hole in the Clouds. If the old rooster isn't limbering up in the opening steps of a scalp-dance, I miss my guess. Mebbe I'd better tame him down a few. You or me had better keep hold of that axe."

Seven stakes had been cut from joists in the lumber-pile. These were driven into the turf, beyond the boundary of the baseball-field. One by one the members of the Triennial squad were led to the several stakes and tied fast with short lengths of rope. The enthusiastic Sioux braves snatched flaming bits of wood from the bonfire and darted toward the captives at the stakes. Apparently they were about to make this a thoroughly realistic rehearsal.

Tiny Tim Jennings, two hundred and fifty pounds, champion hammer-thrower, peerless toastmaster, chairman of the Reunion committee, lost control of his nerves and began to blubber. This infernal nightmare was too much for him. Antonio showed no sympathy, but concluded that the mimic torture had gone far enough. It glutted his desire for reprisal to see his chief tormentor making a babyish spectacle of himself. He spoke to the interpreter, who called out sharply, and the dozen Sioux gathered about him, obedient and mindful of their promise. He distributed the Roman

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candles, sky-rockets, and firecrackers, at which they guffawed and slapped their thighs. They had permission to show what fancy shots they were, said Curly Tom, but if they hurt or burned so much as one of the prisoners at the stake, a heavy fine would be deducted from the monthly wages of the offender.

It was a crackling, fiery inferno, indeed, with crackers exploding at the feet of the victims, red and blue balls from the candles hissing past their ears, rockets "whooshing" so close that the sticks almost combed their hair. Before the ammunition was exhausted, Leaping Wolf scored a hit by furtively attaching a pack of firecrackers to the rear of John Hungry's trousers by means of a buckskin thong, and touching them off with a match. The effect was spectacular, and John Hungry ran until he fell over a bench, detonating at every jump.

This was the cue for an indiscriminate bombardment during which Curly Tom crawled beneath the nearest grand-stand after being shot in the neck with a Roman candle aimed by that deadly marksman, old Hole in the Clouds, whose eyes were streaming with tears of mirth.

"Gosh! I wish I had a bugler here to sound 'cease firing,'" ejaculated the interpreter from his refuge, in which Antonio had hastily joined him. "They're having the time of their lives. What'll we do with the prisoners after the smoke clears? Turn 'em loose?"

"I am not as merciful as that," said Antonio. "It's

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a warm June night. Leave them here to think it over."

"Sure enough. It'll puzzle the rest of their crowd worse than ever. You are some Indian yourself, Mr. Colorado."

"The punishment fits the crime," was Antonio's comment, but he no longer frowned. The account was properly squared. Soon the last firecracker popped, and the last candle found its Indian target. Grinning, oblivious of their scorched skins, the twelve avengers of the honor of Antonio squatted before the seven bound captives and addressed them in terms of guttural derision. Antonio interfered with this amiable diversion, announcing to Tiny Tim Jennings:

"Here is a farewell toast to you. Better luck next time! And when you pick out an Indian, be sure he is not a real one. Somebody will happen along by six or seven o'clock in the morning to untie the ropes."

"You are not going to leave us hung up in this style?" cried Jennings, in beseeching accents. "It's cruel. I told you I was ready to apologize. We are all awfully anxious to apologize."

"Thanks, Mr. Jennings. You were expecting to stay up till daylight, and you are much better off here. You fellows can't possibly smoke or drink too much."

"I'll slack the ropes a little bit," put in Curly Tom, "not so as they can get away, but enough so they won't be choked or chafed. I should say offhand that the fresh air and the quiet surroundin's would do these inebriates a whole heap of good."

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Amid a chorus of distressful laments from the seven Triennial Indians firmly lashed to their seven stout stakes, Antonio led his trusty band to the automobiles. They halted near the campus as the next stop en route, and Antonio escorted the party on foot through the stately quadrangle. Several of the Sioux expressed a wish to see his own wigwam, where he lived and slept while learning the white man's education. Antonio guided them to his handsomely furnished rooms in a spacious dormitory. While they inspected and admired, he stole out to the nearest telephone and notified the restaurant at which he had engaged a private room earlier in the night.

He was not ashamed of them, his own people, when they filed into the restaurant, silent, decorous, and took the places assigned them at the table. Unversed though they were in the little niceties of etiquette, they were essentially well-bred in the larger sense, betraying neither awkwardness nor curiosity. It was fitting that the venerable Hole in the Clouds should take the place at the head of the table. He doffed his war-bonnet, wiped the paint from his cheeks, and his wrinkled features assumed an expression of kindly, benign wisdom. He ate sparingly, his thoughts seemingly elsewhere, and often his gaze turned and rested upon the tall, lithe figure of Antonio Colorado, at the other end of the table.

At length the Sioux chieftain, whose lawless, distant youth had known the foray and the ghost-dance, was moved to speak the things which filled his mind. He

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stood with folded arms, the interpreter at his elbow, and slowly, earnestly said:

“What we did to-night was like the play of little children, a foolish game which made much laughter. One of our young men asked us to do this thing, and we were glad to oblige him. One of our young men? Yes, although he has never seen the wide land where he was born. Yes, although he has even lost the name his father gave him. I remember when he was born. It was in the spring, and the grass was green for the ponies and the cattle. His mother looked out of the lodge and said his name was to be Bright Morning, and his father agreed, for his heart was warm for her, although he liked a stronger name for this fine son of his.

“Thin as smoke are the memories of an old man, and there is no good in stirring troubled waters that have been calm for a long, long time. There was fighting with the soldiers in blue coats. This young man of ours was taken from among the Sioux people. Now behold where that trail has led him. At last our trails have crossed, and we are happy. If we do not see his face again, it will please us to talk about him, to remember that we were his friends for a little while.”

A murmur of approval ran round the table, and Antonio Colorado, the Bright Morning of his tribe, stood on his feet to say something in response. Fastidiously dressed, again the Yale Sophomore, he suggested the presence of a barrier impassable between

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these simple red men and himself, and yet he was conscious that the trails were not wholly divergent, that he was not an alien in this company.

"Some day," said he, "I will visit you, even as you have been kind enough to visit me. And we shall meet again as friends and blood-relations. And it may be that I can do you a service in payment of your goodness to me."

It was at breakfast next morning that Antonio encountered his sagacious chum, Jerry Altemus, that languid young man of the world, who asked, with an air of real concern:

"What's this I hear about some trouble you had at the game yesterday with those Triennial ruffians? Bob Sedgwick was quite fussed up about it, and had a great yarn to tell, how they used violence, and so on."

"Oh, they apologized later," blandly answered Antonio. "They took a fancy to me because I am an Indian."

"Where the deuce were you last night?" demanded Jerry. "Bob and I scouted all over the place for you. I rather fancy that Miss Lombard was expecting you to drop in at the hotel after dinner."

"I had a little business matter at stake," said Antonio, without a change of countenance. "There was something owing me, and I had to go and collect it. With this off my hands, I shall now have leisure to pay my humble respects to Miss Lombard."

A TRANSACTION WITH SHYLOCK

IF put to a vote, Ashton Merrill would have won the verdict as the best dressed Sophomore on the Yale campus. His clothes were to be taken as seriously reflecting the latest modes, and his Chapel Street tailor regarded him as an achievement. There was no display of extravagance in taste, merely a scrupulous attention to those details which, in the opinion of young Mr. Merrill, made the well-groomed gentleman. He was not at all a showy fellow, and had been seldom heard of as a Freshman, making few friends, and rather holding aloof from the common herd. His manners were pleasant enough, but somewhat reserved, conveying the slightest shade of condescension, as though it were a privilege to know him. One might have surmised that he had come from some exclusive preparatory school dominated by social caste, and could not readily adjust himself to the spirit of college democracy.

Little by little the others began to accept Merrill at his own valuation, nor discovered that his campaign was adroitly, thoroughly planned. He had no ambition to shine in athletics or scholarship, but aspired to another sort of recognition, and that he went about it cleverly is proven by the fact that the campus failed to suspect him. To be considered an aristocrat, to gain admittance to the small circle of men

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in his class who bore names associated with rank and wealth—this was the goal of his endeavors. Young Merrill was a climber, and he knew precisely what he wanted.

For a year he had observed, imitated, studied manners, clothes, and deportment more diligently than his text-books—marked the men worth knowing. As a Sophomore, he elected to live alone, and chose a room in the dormitory in which the best crowd was to be found. It was the cheapest room in the building, up under the roof, but preferable to more spacious quarters elsewhere. He was not yet a spendthrift—his allowance did not permit it—and he proposed to make every dollar count.

He felt that he had gained a footing near the top round of the ladder when Jerry Altemus began to drop into his room of an evening, Jerry the bored and fastidious man of the world, who affected an indifference to the Yale doctrine that one fellow was as good as another. Among his intimates were Howard Vanderpool, son of the traction magnate; Bill Dickson, of Detroit, heir to several millions; and Bob Sedgwick, the varsity guard, who was easily the most prominent man in his class. Sedgwick's stamp of approval was worth not quite so much as the favor of these others, for he was a happy-go-lucky person from the real West, who cared not a rap for money, although he had plenty of it, and was hailed as a pal by some of the merest nobodies.

"Why not join us for a night in New York?" amia-

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bly suggested Altemus during one of these chats. "I run down almost every week for dinner and the theatre. One ought to break away from the campus occasionally and cultivate the cosmopolitan point of view. We expect to catch the five-o'clock express tomorrow afternoon. Vanderpool wants us to dine at his house. He mentioned my asking you."

Merrill accepted, with just the right shade of courteous pleasure, although his heart fluttered, and it required an effort to check an effusive response. This was more than he dared to hope for at this stage of his career. It turned out to be a memorable experience. There were four of them, including Bob Sedgwick, who was fairly dragged along, protesting that this New York habit was poor stuff, and Jerry Altemus ought to break himself of it. A Vanderpool limousine, with two men in livery, met them at the station, and went humming up Fifth Avenue to a mansion which had been photographed for all the Sunday supplements.

Young Vanderpool seemed not in the least impressed by its magnificence, nor did the swarm of servants embarrass him. He took them for granted, like the furniture. The graceless Sedgwick shook hands with the butler, and swore that he mistook him for Mr. Vanderpool, senior. The languid attitude of Jerry Altemus indicated that it was not such a bad shack, but he could have done the thing better himself. As for Ashton Merrill, he moved in a new world, dazzling and enviable, but he did not betray himself as a novice. Keen of eye, inwardly alert, he played the game, and

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appeared at ease, to the manner born. Mrs. Vanderpool thought him charming, and invited him down for a dance later in the month.

"I am so glad that my son has found friends of his own kind at New Haven," said she at dinner. "Are you related to the Sherman Merrills of Philadelphia, may I ask? I fancied I noticed a family resemblance."

"Not that I am aware of," Ashton replied, with his engaging smile. "My people are old New England stock. We have lived in the same town for something more than two hundred years, from father to son."

"How very interesting!" pursued the mother of Howard Vanderpool, displaying marked respect for ancient ancestry. "And so you belong to what one might call a county family. Are you fond of outdoor life—sports, and so on?"

"I know a little about farming and horses," the self-possessed Sophomore assured her. "My father is awfully keen on horses. It is in the blood."

"Gentlemen farmers? I quite approve, Mr. Merrill. There is nothing more wholesome. My husband has a farm to play with. You must talk horses with him. He is old-fashioned enough to prefer them to motors."

Mr. Vanderpool was a large, taciturn man, who took no great pains to make himself agreeable to his son's college friends; but, overhearing this conversation, he brightened a trifle, and asked Merrill into the library to smoke a cigar. The host exhibited photographs of several of his prize colts, and the young man's critical comments were so sound that he was asked to spend

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a week-end at the Long Island farm. Bob Sedgwick interrupted to suggest that they had better beat it for Broadway if they wished to see anything more than the last act.

Merrill insisted on paying his share of the evening's fun, to which the others agreed, as a matter of course, money being the least of their concerns. Those who travelled with them were presumed to be able to keep the same pace.

There was a supper at a popular cabaret, after the show, and taxis and lavish tips along their blithesome route, in all of which Ashton Merrill shared with the calm air of a man who had it to burn. He returned to New Haven next day as one who had scaled the barrier, but his happiness was tinged with a secret anxiety. He would find excuses to avoid too many little trips to New York. They were more expensive than he could afford.

These new friends of his soon offered him the chance to join their eating-club. The weekly cost of board was much higher than Merrill had dreamed of paying, but he could not decline without convicting himself as a counterfeit. He determined to economize in other ways, taking care not to be caught at it; but now that he was one of the set of careless spenders, his whole scale of outlay was increased without serious extravagance or dissipation.

A few weeks after Jerry Altemus had condescended to admit him to the dazzling coterie, the affairs of young Mr. Merrill began to hang over him like a cloud.

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There were bills for more clothes, for hand-made shoes, for imported haberdashery, not to mention a café or two, a tobacconist, and a garage. These merchants were not likely to annoy him so long as he was rated as one of the rich men of his class. Such credit accounts were welcomed. He was short of ready cash, however, and had overdrawn the stated allowance from home. Altemus or Sedgwick, in a similar plight, would have borrowed from their friends, without a second thought, but this Merrill could not bring himself to do, because he was a pretender, and afraid of detection.

At his wit's end, too misguided to acknowledge that he could not play the game, he decided to seek a private interview with a useful person known to the campus as "Easy Money" Hopson, who accepted promissory notes in return for loans, and thereby enabled the careless undergraduate to weather periods of financial stress. The nickname of Mr. Samuel Hopson had an ironical flavor, for such of his clients as tried to evade payment found him anything but easy.

He demanded no security, and the poor but deserving student found little favor in his sight. Those who patronized him had fathers who could be depended on to settle in the event of default, and he seldom made a mistake in his rating. Five per cent a month was the reward of this philanthropist. He had driven a hack for years, thereby acquiring an immensely valuable experience of human nature and the ways of Yale, and, retiring from the quarter-deck of his bat-

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tered vehicle, now loafed in a small office which bore no sign on the door. Shrewd, ruddy, and affable was Samuel Hopson, hailed by name by most of the men graduated during a generation, and regarded as more or less of an institution.

Ashton Merrill, hiding an uneasy soul behind a manner extremely self-possessed, sauntered in without knocking, and found the money-lender playing solitaire at his desk. It might have been inferred that the young man had come to grant a favor, not to ask one, as he indifferently observed:

“How are you, Sam? I happen to be caught short. A couple of hundred will do. We all have to come to it.”

There were no awkward questions, no cross-examination. Hopson knew who Merrill's friends were, and was ready to appraise him. He was one of the gilded set of Sophomores, who spent their money freely, and were apt to go broke now and then. The fastidious Sophomore was dressed with the usual nicety, and his aspect in every way suggested the sort of affluence that has no need to flaunt itself. Mr. Hopson smiled cordially, and said, in his rough-and-ready fashion:

“The lads find it handy to drop in on me now and then. The best of them are liable to face a deficit in the budget. Two hundred, Mr. Merrill? Will I make it thirty days?”

The young man looked disturbed, hastily reflecting that he could not hope to meet the obligation with only a month's leeway, and casually suggested:

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"If it isn't convenient to settle as soon as that, I presume you won't mind renewing the document?"

"Suit yourself. Any time between now and graduation," replied Easy Money Hopson, the friend of the distressed.

"I shall have to chop it out of my allowance, you know," Ashton explained, forcing a smile. "It's the kind of stunt a fellow isn't anxious to have his father get wise to."

Mr. Hopson understood the situation perfectly, having dealt with many like it, and chuckled sympathetically as he filled out the note and passed it across the desk for the signature. The borrower hesitated, fumbled with the pen, and then wrote in a bold scrawling hand. The benevolent Hopson read the young fellow's thoughts. They were a bit nervous when they came to him for the first time, afraid of paternal discovery, but this soon wore off.

"Come again, Mr. Merrill," said he, laying the note in a leather wallet. "I mention no names, but there's friends of yours that are included in my collection of Yale autographs."

Ashton made no reply to this, as he descended the stairs sternly resolving to turn over a new leaf. He would give it out that he was studying for honors, or writing for the *Lit*, and could afford no time for play. In this righteous mood, he led the life of a hermit through one whole week, at the end of which Jerry Altemus coaxed him to join a house-party at Stam-

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ford. It sounded so extremely swagger that Merrill yielded to temptation. In the party were two or three older men, and they were fond of auction bridge.

Jerry cautioned him, but Merrill insisted on playing with them, confident that the luck would turn his way. He needed the money, and, of course, he lost, and persisted in losing more. Soon after he returned to New Haven he negotiated another note with Sam Hopson, and was seen coming out of the building by the dawdling Altemus, who had just bought a bull-terrier, and was taking it out for a stroll. To be caught in a transaction with the local Shylock appealed to him as merely humorous, and he therefore observed, with cheerful banter:

"Five per cent a month is the crime of the century, eh, old top, but we have to have it to make the wheels go round. Why didn't you come to me? I happen to have a bundle just now."

Merrill colored to his ears, and committed the blunder of denying the charge.

"Guess again, Jerry," said he. "I had a date at the tutoring school on the third floor—it's up to me to hire a man to help me pass off that confounded condition in French."

The wise Jerry grinned, but made no comment, and proceeded to call attention to the fine points of the bull-terrier. Later in the day he lounged in Bob Sedgwick's room, and was moved to remark:

"As the evil old man, who sits and looks on, I am considering the case of our natty comrade, 'Ash'

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Merrill. You have noticed nothing odd, I'm sure. You have not learned to observe, and you never think."

"A nice boy—a trifle dippy on the clothes proposition," absently replied Sedgwick, who was writing a long letter home. "However, we all have our failings. Out in the woolly West he might be classed as a bit of a snob, but that kind of an air seems to go among you people. You are the same, only more so, Jerry."

"Nonsense! I don't go howling around the campus that every greasy grind is my chum and brother because we chance to be in Yale at the same time. I didn't ask your opinion of me. It's of no consequence, anyhow. I saw Merrill coming down-stairs from Easy Money's office, this morning, and he lied about it. Guilt was written all over his handsome countenance. An odd circumstance, Bob."

"Not at all," retorted the other, who chronically disagreed with the verdicts of Jerry. "Merrill may have a sense of shame. You have none."

"As demonstrated by the fact that I consort with you. Too true! On the level, Bob, there is something wrong with Ashton Merrill. He is in big trouble, and he is trying to bluff it out. This incident, the childish evasion with respect to the estimable burgler, Sam Hopson, confirms suspicions which had been lurking in my intelligent mind for some time."

"Oh, please shut up! Can't you see I'm busy?" cried Sedgwick.

"I am never too busy to be interested in a suffering human soul," exclaimed Jerry, unperturbed. "Foot-

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ball makes you beefy giants callous to others' pain. You belong to one of the lower orders, a little higher than the lobster."

"Lobsters are high, believe me!" seriously commented Bob. "I ordered two of them, broiled, last night, and the bill——"

"I hope it broke you," said Jerry, displaying irritation. "Very well, it's a waste of time to discuss matters worth while with you. But, mark well what I say, you will feel sorry for Ashton Merrill some day. That boy has struck slippery going, and he's almost due to skid."

II

In the spring of the year, even a battered old buccaneer of a money-lender, who profits by the folly of youth, may feel a sentimental impulse. There came to Mr. Samuel Hopson, from the small village in which he was born, the information that the family homestead was about to be disposed of at public sale. His own kindred all rested in the churchyard, and the property had passed into alien hands, but it had belonged to several generations of Hopsons, and it occurred to Samuel that he should like to become the owner of it. Some day he might wish to return to the hamlet with his ill-gotten gains, and be an honest country squire, with a few cows in the barn, and a garden to play with.

Diverted by these pleasant reflections, he put the office key in his pocket and started off on a journey,

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leaving his clients no other recourse than a pawn-shop. His destination was away from the main line of a railroad, and he was compelled to wait at three different junctions, with connections so poor that the train left him behind on the last stage of the trip, and he found himself stranded overnight. This misfortune was endured in a spirit of tolerant resignation, and Mr. Hopson determined to make the best of it by acquainting himself with this unfamiliar town. It was named Cedar Falls, and appeared clean, prosperous, and contented. He found a hackman at the station, who informed him that the hotel was several blocks distant, at which he elected to ride, and, for sociability's sake and as a matter of habit, he climbed to the box instead of stowing himself inside.

The driver was a broad-shouldered, hearty man, who looked as if he had lived out-of-doors in all weathers. Everybody called him Joe, and his own greeting was apt to end in a jovial laugh which matched his twinkling blue eye and stalwart bulk. He held the reins over a pair of bays so well gaited, and showing such excellent care and condition, that the professional interest of Sam Hopson was awakened, and he warmly exclaimed:

"You don't see a pair like that hitched into a public rig every day, brother. It's a good deal in the handling of 'em, too. You know your business."

"Those are good hosses, and they get treated right. Six year old, and sound as a dollar," was the emphatic reply.

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"They cost money," observed Sam, with the air of an expert. "We used to think the automobiles would make 'em cheaper."

"They're dear, and hard to find. Five hundred wouldn't buy this pair of hosses. Staying in town long? Salesman, are you?"

"I'm just here for the night—enjoying a little vacation," answered Mr. Hopson, who found the company congenial. "Where is your stable?"

"Around the corner from the hotel. Drop in after supper, if you find nothing better to do. You seem to be a man that likes to talk hoss."

The traveller accepted, with thanks, and disclosed the fact that he had driven a hack for many years and still owned an interest in a livery business. In the early evening he explored the main street, but soon tired of this because of twinges of rheumatism, and sought the livery-stable as a friendly haven. The building was in need of paint, but the interior seemed as clean as whitewash, brooms, and a hose could make it. There was the smell of hay and of healthy horses, which the visitor found pleasant.

Joe, the hackman, sat in the office, a pipe in his mouth while he read a newspaper. On the walls were gaudy lithographs in praise of spavin cures and condition powders, portraits of famous trotters, and announcements of live-stock auction sales. Sam Hopson sighed, for he was soon to be an old man, and he wished he were back again in a plug hat and a long silver-buttoned coat, ready for a fight or a frolic, instead of

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getting rich at lending money to silly undergraduates. Selecting a splint-bottomed armchair by the street window, he cocked his heels on the sill, and observed:

"Who do you work for? What's the owner's name? I didn't happen to look at the sign over the door. Been driving for him long, have you?"

The other man laid down his paper, and laughed as he said: "I guess I'm the boss, if you don't speak it loud enough to let my wife hear. When I'm short of help, I take a hack out, and nobody in our town thinks any the less of me. The fact is, that it's hard to hire men you want to trust a good team of hosses with."

Sam apologized for his blunder, and declared that the drinks were on him, but Joe declined the invitation to adjourn to the hotel bar.

"Merrill is my name," said he. "There are four brothers of us, all farmers but me. The family has been in this locality ever since the first settlers came over. I sort of drifted into the livery business, taking it over from an uncle who died of a sudden, and aiming to run it only till the estate was settled up. First thing I knew, all my money was tied up in it, and here I am."

The name of Merrill conveyed no more than a fleeting sense of association to Sam Hopson.

"That's something like my own stable," he replied. "I bought an interest with my savings as a driver, and there's never been quite the right chance to un-

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load. Of course, the auto service has cut in, but there's still room for the old-fashioned hay-burner even in New Haven."

Joseph Merrill displayed a lively interest as he exclaimed: "So you come from New Haven! I wish you had said so in the first place. But maybe you aren't much acquainted in Yale College. It's foolish of me to get excited, for there's as many as three thousand students there."

"Is some lad from Cedar Falls down there now?" politely queried Sam, quite certain in his own mind that he could offer no information. His clients moved in another social sphere.

"It is my own boy—a Sophomore!" cried the proud parent, in stentorian accents, enjoying the dramatic moment. "Yes, sir, Ashton Merrill is a Yale man, and I'm proud of it!"

The rubicund countenance of Samuel Hopson expressed a kind of stupefaction, and he gasped for breath. Rallying from the shock, he tried to hide his chagrin that he should have been so completely taken in. There could not be two Ashton Merrills in the Sophomore class. The one whom he knew was stamped with all the marks of the millionaire caste, and went the pace with the others of his kind. If Sam Hopson had made such a blunder as this, then he was losing his grip, and it was time to quit. Grasping curmudgeon that he was, guilty of outrageous usury, there was in him a kindlier, softer streak, and he could not bring himself to reveal the truth. It went against the grain

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to demand payment of this country stable-keeper, who was fortunate if he earned a thousand a year above expenses.

Something had to be said. Sam could not sit staring with his mouth open. At the window he was more or less in shadow, and the other man failed to perceive his distress.

"Ashton Merrill, did you say?" murmured the Shyllock from New Haven. "It's what you'd call a coincidence, blessed if it ain't, my dear sir! Why, he was pointed out to me only the other day as I was passing by the campus. One of the best-known men of his class!"

"Unexpected, this meeting his dad. I don't blame you for being flabbergasted," laughed Joe Merrill. "Me with a few hosses in an old barn, and a boy at Yale College. Here, Mr. Hopson, my house is right next door. Come in, and let me introduce you to his mother. You come from New Haven, and you have actually set eyes on our youngster. Looking well, was he? He don't write as frequent as we'd like, but he's busy. You know how it is."

The money-lender felt a most uncomfortable reluctance to enter the house, and he had no desire whatever to meet Ashton's mother, but there was no avoiding it. He was glad of a respite, when the father announced, as they marched into the sitting-room of the cottage:

"She must have run in to see one of the neighbors for a few minutes. Never mind; we'll wait here."

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The riddle was too much for Sam's curiosity, and he ventured a leading question:

"And how is the boy doing in college? Some of them study harder than others."

"Not a word of complaint from his teachers, Mr. Hopson; and he is careful to make his money go as far as possible. He has just so much to spend, and he hasn't asked us for an extra dollar. There's a lot of rich men's sons at Yale, and I was a little mite afraid the example they set might turn his head, but I don't have to worry."

"Some of 'em are inclined to make a splash," gravely agreed the other. "Have you been down to visit the boy?"

"Not yet; and I dunno as I'll go at all. His mother feels about as I do. It's an expensive trip, and—well, we're pretty plain country folks, and we don't feel quite up to visiting at Yale College."

"You make a mistake, in my opinion," dogmatically declared Samuel.

"It's for us to judge," quickly exclaimed Joe Merrill, as though his son had been criticised without cause. "Before my wife comes in, maybe I'd better explain how we were able to send him. You can look around and see for yourself that we couldn't afford it. Ashton was possessed to go to Yale ever since he was in Cedar Falls High School. There was a camp of Yale students at Bow Lake for two summers, and he used to drive over there often. It was funny to see him imitate 'em, the way they wore their clothes and the

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slang they talked, but this was only skin deep, of course.

"There wasn't no way, though, to give Ashton what he wanted till my wife's Aunt Mary Chickering up and died, and left her something in her will. It was enough to keep Ashton in college for two years, and after that I hoped my business might be in shape to carry him the rest of the way. The legacy would have come in mighty useful at home, and I argued for a while to coax my wife into keeping it; but you know what women are—unselfish creatures, all bound up in their children, and no sacrifice too great for 'em to make."

"Um-m! And how is business?" grunted the pilgrim from New Haven, who had sat as though unmoved by this recital. "Can you see it through for two years more?"

"We intend to, somehow," was the stout rejoinder. "There's hard luck and dull times in all lines. I lost two fine hosses last winter; colic killed one, and lock-jaw the] other. That's my wife's step at the door."

Sam came out of a brown study, and looked up to see a small woman, very slender, almost childish in appearance beside her deep-chested husband. She seemed startled, even shy, at sight of a stranger, but he read her aright as the stronger, more purposeful soul of the two—the guiding spirit. In pursuit of an ideal, to attain a goal, she would go through fire and water. In a voice low and gentle, she expressed her pleasure at meeting Mr. Hopson; but when she was told that

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he lived in New Haven, and had recently seen Ashton in the flesh, her eyes kindled, and the accents were beseeching as she said:

“Oh, if you only could have talked with him! Do you happen to know any of his friends? Have you heard them mention him? He hasn’t been home since last September. At the Christmas vacation time he refused to come because of the expense.”

Mr. Hopson was conscious of an intense dislike for this whole wretched situation. It was unfair to have business so entangled with sentiment. He wished with all his heart he had never laid eyes on this cheerful stableman. Mrs. Merrill was the last straw. Doggedly he spun one kindly falsehood after another, painting Ashton as an earnest scholar and shining example, quoting what imaginary friends had said in praise of him. At length he pretended a headache, and so made his escape.

Joe Merrill walked to the hotel with him, urging him to run in for breakfast with them before taking the morning train. Sam Hopson mumbled a pretext of some sort, for he swore to himself that he would not face the boy’s mother again. Joe sent sundry messages to Ashton, exhorting him to keep up the fine record, and suggesting to Mr. Hopson that he ask him out for supper, as a particular favor, so that they might talk over Cedar Falls and the folks at home. In the morning, the pilgrim arose early, and footed it to the station lest Joe Merrill might invite him to ride on the box of the hack. Glum and abstracted was the

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Shylock of the campus as he resumed his journey in quest of the Hopson homestead.

He had been stung in the region of his pocket, a casualty most unusual. Ashton Merrill's promissory notes were so much waste paper, unless they should be put up to his father, who, no doubt, would have to clap a mortgage on the stable or sell some of his horses.

"And this young four-flusher trots in the bunch with Howard Vanderpool and Jerry Altemus and the other high rollers," soliloquized the elderly pirate, as he glared at the landscape from a car-window. "And he was doing me a favor to come into my office at all. Not that he really means to skin me, but he'll never be able to pay one dollar out of what he gets from home. I'll have to hand it to him, though. He learned more, and he learned it quicker, than any lad that ever I see break into Yale College. His old man drives his own hacks! Could you beat it?"

III

Life at college had become like a fog to Ashton Merrill, and he could see no further than from one day to the next. He began to shun the friends whom he had valued so highly, and to feel that they were responsible for his troubles. He no longer sauntered into the most expensive shops; and when he happened to meet one of his creditors the sensation was disturbing. It was the tailor who brought the crisis to a head. He had

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heavy bills of his own to meet, and collections were uncommonly slow.

He was a long-suffering person, usually contented to let the student patrons settle as they pleased; but just at this time his patience was worn to a raw edge. These rich men's sons had no right to keep him awake nights with business worries. They had the money, and it was unfair to let their honest debts drag through a year. He was tired of sending them monthly statements. In this rebellious mood, he encountered the immaculate Merrill on the Chapel Street pavement, and tried to look pleasant as he suggested:

"Sorry to bother you, but the account has been running some time, and a check would be a great favor."

"I expect to attend to it next month," replied the young man, with a touch of hauteur. Tradesmen were not presumed to hold a fellow up in this annoying manner.

"Not next month, Mr. Merrill, but now," persisted the obnoxious tailor, who resented the tone of voice. "Of course, I don't like to have to send the bill to your father, but——"

"Oh, there is no need of that," he was hastily assured. "To-morrow will do? I'll see you, without fail. I had no idea you were hard up."

"Thank you, Mr. Merrill," said the tailor, mollified, but still alert. "I shall look for a check to-morrow."

Returning to the campus, Ashton realized that if

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he should not keep his promise, other merchants might get wind of it from the tailor, and hasten to send their bills to his father. There was only one way of sparing for time—to borrow again from Sam Hopson, before he, too, should become suspicious.

It so happened that on this very day the accommodating Samuel had returned from the expedition to the home of his ancestors. He was turning over in his mind the odd episode of the night in Cedar Falls when young Merrill himself entered the office. The money-lender studied him with a new interest. The boy was a singular proposition—not intentionally dishonorable, but guilty of an elaborate scheme of deception. His ambition in coming to Yale had been all wrong, for he had no idea of what education meant.

“A couple of hundred more, if you don’t mind, Sam,” said the dapper Sophomore, whose smooth cheek was a trifle pale. “I shall begin paying it back before long.”

Undecided how to handle the case, Mr. Hopson concluded to delay action. He therefore made answer:

“You have caught me short of cash, Mr. Merrill. For once, I can’t accommodate you. The boys have drained me dry.”

He spoke respectfully, as was befitting in the presence of this lordly young patron, who winced, mustered his courage, and ventured to ask:

“Is it worth while coming in to-morrow, Sam?”

“I’m afraid not. I went out of town to make a little real-estate investment on the side, and my bank

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balance looks as if it had been hit by something. Can't you touch your dad for an advance on the next term's allowance?"

"I suppose so," said Ashton, as if it was really a matter of no great importance. At a leisurely pace, he left the office and passed, whistling, down the stairs. Mr. Hopson shook his head, and turned to the safe, from which he withdrew a tin box and absently cogitated, with young Merrill's promissory notes in front of him. There was good in the boy, hidden somewhere beneath the sham and the pretense.

"I'll be condemned if I can send these notes to Cedar Falls," said he to himself, "and yet I can't afford to lose out on 'em. It's kill or cure, and it sort of seems as though I had a duty to perform. I've got myself in up to my hocks."

He rumpled his gray hair with both hands, and a pleased grin appeared on his battered countenance. He was a pretty tough old sinner, and he was ready to add forgery to his crimes. He straightway composed the following telegram, and lost no time in sending it:

JOSEPH MERRILL, *Cedar Falls, Vermont.*

Please come at once. Not sick, but need you. Very important.

ASHTON R. MERRILL.

The operator in the railroad station at Cedar Falls received the message a few minutes before the afternoon local was due to leave and make the main-line connection with the night express, which ran through

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to New York. He dashed outside and found Merrill, whose hack had just fetched two passengers.

"This looks like a hurry call, Joe," exclaimed the operator, giving him the slip of paper. "Too bad you can't pull out on No. 14 and make New Haven tomorrow morning."

Ashton's father was a man of action. Puzzled for an instant, he read the telegram twice over, leaped down from the box, and called to an idler on the platform:

"Take these hosses to the stable, Ed, and tell the men I'll be away a couple of days. I've got just time to 'phone my wife and explain it to her."

This was no easy task, but he told her that boys were liable to go up in the air now and then, and probably Ashton was in some kind of a snarl with his professors. His mind was too absorbed in wondering what could have caused this imperative summons to be conscious of his personal appearance. The clothes he happened to have on were respectable enough, but wrinkled and bagged by much wear, and a couple of buttons had been jerked off the coat that very morning. He was fond of an old soft hat too wide of brim to be in fashion. It was useful in stormy weather, and, on his native heath, it was becoming to a man of his burly, breezy type.

He rode all night in a sleeping-car, and rested poorly. It was eight in the morning when he jumped into a taxicab at the New Haven station and was driven to the campus. Ashton's room was empty, and the

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janitor told him that all the boys were in chapel. The father waited outside until the crowd came streaming forth, in noisy disorder, to scatter to the recitation halls. Ashton had lingered, as usual, avoiding the undignified rush, and he was walking alone, when Joseph Merrill hastily approached, both hands outstretched.

"I jumped aboard No. 14 just as I was, right off a hack!" cried he, with his whole-souled laugh. "What's the matter, Ash? Your telegram threw a scare into me."

The amazed young man was dumb for the moment. The first sign of recovery, characteristically enough, was a quick glance aside to see who might be within earshot. Then he replied unsteadily, his wits wholly mystified:

"What telegram, dad? I never sent you one! I—I— Of course, I'm awfully glad to have you here, but I haven't the slightest idea what brought you."

His parent, more excited than before, rummaged in a pocket for the message, and flourished it as he exclaimed:

"Read it! There's your name signed at the bottom, and it couldn't have been addressed to me any plainer. You say you never sent it? If I didn't know better, I'd suspect you had started drinking since you came to college."

Ashton did as he was told, and looked up in a helpless manner. His bewilderment was so genuine that Joseph began to comprehend that he spoke the truth.

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"Did somebody do it as a joke, son?" was the query. "What was the sense of it? I must let your mother know first thing."

"It's beyond me. No, this couldn't have been done as a joke. Better come to my room and sit down for a while. Have you had anything to eat?"

"No appetite to speak of, Ash. Never mind about that. Yes, I guess we'd better go where it's quiet, and talk things over. I'm sort of stood on my head."

They climbed the stairs of the dormitory, the Sophomore in a silent humor, his thoughts not for his father to know. Such a visit as this, without warning, had never been foreseen. Joe Merrill halted as he entered the room, and looked about him with keen interest. He was not obtuse, and he wondered how the boy could have furnished his living quarters with so much elegance. The building itself, the glimpses into other rooms, as he had ascended, conveyed an impression of lavish outlay to one of his simple tastes. However, this was none of his business, for Ashton had lived within his income, and he said, as he lighted a cheap cigar:

"Glad to see you so comfortably fixed. Well, now that I'm here, what's the use of fussing over that bogus telegram? We'll get at the bottom of it somehow, and I'm thankful you're in no scrape. Sure everything is all right?"

"Right as can be, dad. I want to hear the news from home."

"Presently, Ash. You look thin and out of condi-

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tion to me, and your color isn't as good as it was. Off your feed, or anything like that?"

"Not a bit of it!" But the response was far from hearty. "They work us hard during the spring term, and perhaps I have been indoors too much."

"It's a worried look," persisted the father. "If there is anything on your mind, now's the time to let it out."

Just then Jerry Altemus, wishing to borrow a textbook, strolled in, carelessly apologized, and murmured his errand. Ashton tried to meet the test, and failed miserably. He was on the point of letting Jerry withdraw without an introduction, hoping to evade the issue; but the elder Merrill stepped forward, with that genial smile of his, and heartily exclaimed:

"One of your college chums, son? I want to meet a few of 'em while I'm here. You'll have to tell him how I had to come at a gallop, without changin' into my best clothes."

Ashton presented Mr. Altemus, who, in a flash, understood the situation, and warmed to the broad-shouldered man from Cedar Falls. One had merely to look at Joe Merrill to know that he rang true; and it was just as unmistakable that Ashton was ashamed of him, and chagrined at the exposure of his own pretensions which this visit entailed. It was a significant tableau, as viewed by the cynical Jerry, and he was able to surmise what had been wrong with Ashton. Friendly and deferential was the demeanor of Jerry as he addressed himself to Joseph, ignoring the son:

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"Ashton said nothing about expecting you, Mr. Merrill. Selfish of him, I call it; but I hope it isn't too late to arrange a little dinner in your honor; and how about motoring to the field this afternoon to see the baseball practice?"

"Thank you, Mr. Altemus," was the sincere answer, and for some reason Joe's eyes filled. Perhaps he, too, had perceived in the behavior of his son something which, against his will, made him suspect himself to be an intruder not wholly welcome. "I must go home to-night," he went on, "and I won't have time to play around. You see, I run a little livery-stable in my town, and, being short-handed just now, I have to take out the station hack and help tend to the hosses. There was some mistake about my coming to New Haven."

"A faked wire," hastily put in Ashton, betraying his utter confusion at this reference to the stable. To make matters worse for him, there was a perceptible aroma of a horse in the room, and as he moved to open a window Jerry Altemus guessed why he did it.

"A faked wire?" said the latter, and his voice had a biting edge. "How very extraordinary, Mr. Merrill! I hope you don't lay it to any of us fellows. We have no use for fakes at Yale."

The shot went home, and Ashton dared not let his father see his face. The house of cards had collapsed. Jerry moved to the door, offering his hand to Joe, and urging him to drop into the rooms on the next floor below. Left to themselves, the father regarded his

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boy with slow, thoughtful deliberation. He knew men as well as horses. Finishing the scrutiny, he sighed and said:

"I guess I'll run out and send that message to mother. She'll be waiting."

"All right, dad. I have a recitation in ten minutes, and I really ought not to miss it. I'll be back in an hour. Do you want to look around and meet me here?"

"Yes, Ash. We'll go out to feed somewhere at noon. You needn't bother to make me acquainted with any more of your friends."

While crossing Chapel Street, Mr. Merrill, of Cedar Falls, spied a familiar figure, and loudly hailed Samuel Hopson. They were glad to meet again, Joe assuring him:

"I meant to look you up this afternoon. Never dreamed being here so soon, but somebody put up a job on me."

The campus Shylock grasped him by the arm and led him toward a side street, explaining:

"Supposing we amble over to my stable, the one I told you I was interested in, and have a chat. In a hurry to telegraph home, are you? Better wait a little while."

This was uttered in a tone of command, and Joe submitted, feeling the need of companionship. They soon turned into a dingy stable office, for all the world like Joe Merrill's, with the same kind of an art collection on the walls. The strategy of Samuel was sound.

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This was the best place in which to thrash out the case of the errant Sophomore. His father dropped wearily into a chair and gazed at the long aisle between the rows of stalls, and heard the horses munching hay. Sam Hopson puckered his grizzled brows, and said abruptly:

"I saw you get off the train, and I laid for you at the campus, Merrill. You see, I knew you were coming."

Then you must be the rooster that sent the fool message," was the indignant reply. "What in the mischief— Look here, Hopson, is anything wrong with your head?"

"Nobody ever called it soft. Yes, I butted in, with good intentions, though I'm a mean old cuss, as a rule. I wanted you to size up the situation for yourself. How's the boy?"

"I don't know what you're driving at," said the father, perplexed, and a little sad. "It's plain enough to figger that you thought I was needed here, and you may be right. Ashton is dreadfully worried and upset. He couldn't hide it from me."

"You had better get it straight from me," Sam grimly declared. "That lad of yours has been throwing a false front, dreaming he was rich, until he owed money right and left. I hold his notes for several hundred, so you can see how well he got away with the bluff. Hold on, now! Don't flare up. These notes can wait. That wasn't why I sent for you."

"Let me see 'em. I'll have to hear Ashton acknowl-

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edge he signed 'em, before I believe he did such a thing!" cried Joseph Merrill. "If it's true, I'll pay up, of course, if it takes my last dollar."

"You can't afford to," brusquely rejoined Sam, "and it will do the boy no good if you do squeeze out the coin to redeem this paper. Will you let me hand you some advice? I've been watching these lads for a good many years."

Joe Merrill sat brooding over the revelation which, in his heart, he feared could not be disproved. It confirmed his own impressions, explaining why Ashton had seemed so unhappy and worn. His quick temper got the upper hand, and he burst out:

"It was a blunder to send him to college! Spoiled him, has it? He ought to have been kept in Cedar Falls. The minute I'm sure of the facts, I'll yank him home by the collar."

"It does spoil a few of 'em," agreed Sam, "but we don't have to give this one up a dead loss. Shall I send for him? In a history recitation, is he? I can write a few words that will fetch him here on the run."

Joe nodded assent. He was in no condition to think for himself. No more than a few minutes later, Ashton entered, out of breath, and failed to perceive his father as he exclaimed:

"Hello, Sam! Dug up that two hundred for me, did you? Awfully obliged. Another note to sign? I had the dickens of a time to get excused—had to tell the prof that my old man was in town and insisted on seeing me."

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Sam pointed with his thumb, and Ashton turned, to behold his "old man" in a corner. The youngster gulped, threw up his hands, and started for the door, but Sam blocked the exit. In Ashton's opinion, no more impossible situation had ever existed outside of a nightmare. He was speechless, and all he saw was the expression of his father's face—hurt, disappointed, bewildered. The culprit was expecting threats of punishment, denunciation, a stormy scene, and this reception was so very different that he felt a lump in his throat, and the desire to be forgiven. A strong man was this father of his, a rock in time of trouble, as his own town knew, and for the first time the son was beginning to perceive that, compared with his own people, no other friends were worth while. This was an affair to be discussed betwixt him and his dad, as man to man, without Sam Hopson's interference, and, with a dignity that was no longer assumed, Ashton pulled himself together and said:

"I never intended to cheat anybody out of what I owed them. It was a case of getting started on the toboggan, and no way to stop. I'm darned glad, honestly, that you came to New Haven, father, though I didn't seem very grateful. I couldn't blame you if you took off your coat and gave me an old-fashioned wallop. But that wouldn't square matters with Sam Hopson and the rest of them."

"Here's where I poke another finger in the pie," broke in Sam, who had been fidgeting, and rubbing his chin. "I soak rich men's sons five per cent a month,

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but my rate to livery-stable men in Cedar Falls is six per cent per annum; and, if I was asked, I'd say it would be agreeable to me to let Ashton Merrill work out the debt."

"At home, with me, do you mean?" asked the father.

"That's fair enough," exclaimed the son, "and I haven't a word to say if you decide to put me in the stable; but if there was only some way for me to get another chance, and stay in college and try to make good—but—but I have no right to ask for another chance——"

"You sound to me like a boy that had woke up from his bad dreams," said Joseph Merrill, wistfully regarding the repentant prodigal. "If I take you back with me in disgrace, it will 'most kill your mother."

"Other fellows work their way through college," earnestly exclaimed Ashton. "I could find something to do, and I am ready to tackle it."

"Those notes could be held till you get on your feet and can begin to make payments on 'em yourself," suggested Sam, a Shylock so human that he was surprised at himself.

"And my mother need know nothing about this—this trouble," said her son, to whom this was the most vital fact of the argument. "I guess I needed something like this, swift and sudden."

"I am willing to give the scheme a trial," heartily asserted the sire. "We'll send that wire to mother right away. I'll say you were anxious to consult me about your plans, and things are satisfactory."

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These two left the stable arm in arm, and the younger man was no longer ashamed to be seen on the campus with the elder. Joe Merrill made one more remark, which displayed a wisdom far deeper than his boy's career had hitherto shown:

"I have a notion that a man like your friend, Jerry Altemus, will think a good deal more of you for buckling down to the job of getting an education in your shirt-sleeves."

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HIS father was governor of a northern Chinese province remote from the sea, a rugged land of red hills and dusty plains extending to the Great Wall. Nobody knew how many million people were under his sway. They were a swarthy, big-framed stock, unlike the docile yellow coolies of the south, and their temper was turbulent. The empire in revolution, the overthrow of a dynasty, the establishment of a republic, and the amazing inrush of modern ideas had made no such commotion here as elsewhere. The spirit of the old China was still dominant. The governor ruled with wisdom, nor spared the iron hand of severity to maintain the semblance of law and order. What was more rare, he possessed integrity.

The apple of his eye was his only son, young Sung Wu Chen, and it was for a momentous interview that he had summoned him to the audience-room after a crowd of lesser officials had departed with elaborate ceremonial and the rustle of silken robes. The governor was a spare man, a little bent over. Obeying the edict, he had cut off his queue, and the hair that showed beneath the mandarin's cap was turning white. His thin face was wrinkled and tired, a face singularly intelligent and stamped with the caste of his aristocratic breeding and ancestry.

The son showed the same fine strain, not moulded

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from the common clay. Of smaller stature than his father, his manner had a kindred dignity and ease. It was significant that he wore European clothing, a serge suit smartly cut, while the governor was august in the flowing garments of his rank, whose pattern had been unchanged for centuries, a fan hanging from his jewelled girdle. The lad, Sung Wu Chen, bowed with courtly respect, and the father leaned forward in the chair of carved teak-wood to clasp his hand. They talked together in the dialect of their language that is peculiar to the scholar and the gentleman.

"I have given much thought to your affairs," said the governor, his expression a shade wistful. He aptly quoted from the *Shing Yu*, or Sacred Commands, for he was profoundly learned in the classics: "'Pay just regard to paternal and filial duties, in order to give due importance to the relations of life.'"

Sung Wu Chen smiled, and, not to be outdone, replied with a maxim of Confucius: "'Knowledge produces pleasure clear as water.'"

"It is well said," gravely spoke the governor, "but the old knowledge is passing and the world is turned upside down. What the Western mind calls the awakening of China is a process painful, disturbed, darkly uncertain. We are trying to run before we have learned to walk, my son. I myself am unable to acquire this new civilization with clear understanding. The brittle stalk of dry millet breaks before a rush of wind, but the young willow-shoot bends and readily adapts itself."

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The speaker filled the tiny bowl of his long-stemmed pipe with a pinch of tobacco and thoughtfully inhaled. His emotions were poignant, but he concealed them behind a philosophic calmness of aspect. His son was stirred to enthusiasm. It kindled his sensitive features and his gestures were ardent as he replied, speaking rapidly:

"And I am the willow-shoot, most honorable sir? There are many of us, and it is important that we should be trained aright. Four thousand years of Chinese culture and tradition and precedent have been tossed to the rubbish heap. Only the foundations remain. I desire to learn how to build according to the methods and the sagacity of the West."

"Then you should not learn at second hand," declared the elder man. "It is best for you to go from among your own people. The ways of the foreigner are already familiar to you. Ah, it is not long since we called them barbarians. The American tutor employed for your benefit has taught you many things. You speak and write the uncouth language with an ease that astonishes me. This tutor gained his wisdom in a great university of his own land, the name of which is Yale. At Changsha, as you know, other graduates of this seat of learning have established a college called Yale in China."

"A friend of mine is a student at Changsha," eagerly explained Sung Wu Chen. "It is wonderfully excellent, but at best a rivulet from the fountain and source in America. It is there, indeed, that I would go, with

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your most gracious approbation, to what my tutor calls 'the mother of men, old Yale.'"

"It is so decreed," said the governor, stifling a sigh. "I have arrived at this conclusion. Your departure will be arranged at the proper time."

The season of the year was summer, torrid by day and dry with desert winds. Doors and latticed windows were opened, and from the room in which they sat the spacious courtyard was visible. It was populous and noisy with house servants, *yamen* runners or messengers, interpreters, and ragged petitioners airing grievances, while a few infantrymen in khaki, of the new army, lounged on guard duty. In the street beyond, as seen through the gilded gateway, eddied a torrent of humanity, of carts and camels and donkeys, all jostling, intermixed in stifling dust. Mongol and Manchu and Chinese, they fought and sweated for bare existence in an overcrowded land. The reek of them and their filthy streets was blown into the courtyard. The son of the governor gazed out through the gateway and his elation was sobered. He beheld a problem almost beyond solving, a task to stagger the imagination. Earnestly he spoke, after long thought:

"What can be done with this China of ours? Do those yonder know or care? Machinery, railroads, steamboats? They will bring starvation to millions who now toil with their backs and legs and hands. It is for me to try to grasp the economics, the history, the government of this Western civilization which we must

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adapt to our own peculiar needs or perish as a nation. With profound gratitude, oh, my worshipful parent, I go to Yale in America to make myself worthy of you and my revered ancestors."

They bowed low to each other, and the governor went to confer with his secretaries. His son fled from the audience-chamber, shedding his dignity as he ran, and burst into another building of the compound. A clean-built young man in white linen sat with his feet cocked up on a desk, and he was reading a New York paper two months old. He raised his eyes from the sporting page, regarded Sung Wu Chen with quizzical interest, and drawled in English:

"Something doing? I have an intuition that my job is about to slip from under me."

His pupil slapped him on the back and replied in the same tongue:

"Bully for us, Mr. Gray. He will send me to Yale. It is all your influence. I am under ten thousand obligations. But I think you may keep a job if you wish as a foreign adviser to my father. He esteems you very much, indeed."

"I wasn't thinking of myself," said Harvey Gray, who had been persuaded to quit the consular service for this more lucrative connection. "Outward bound for old New Haven, are you, Sung? Great luck. Just tell them that you saw me. Drop out to the field when the grads come back to coach the eleven and say you know an old pal of theirs. I have enjoyed these two years with you. I hoped all the time the governor

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could come to see it my way. And so he has surrendered."

"You bet, Mr. Gray. Can I enter the Sophomore class, do you think? And am I too small to play football?"

"Without hurling posies at myself, Sung, you can break into the second year. That mind of yours runs on ball-bearings. As for football, I'm afraid you lack the heft, although you are there with the punch."

Sung Wu Chen looked disappointed, but he resolved to be as fine a pattern of a Yale man as Mr. Gray, nevertheless. They spent the rest of the day together, and the exiled American fought down the hungry homesickness that would not be denied. News travels fast in a swarming Chinese household, and that evening there came to Sung Wu Chen a burly, battered retainer with a scar on his chin. On the breast of his blue blouse was stitched a device to indicate that he belonged to the retinue of the governor, and he wore it with swaggering pride. His early history was clouded, but it was rumored that he had been a bandit condemned to execution. In gratitude for pardon, he had attached himself to Sung Wu Chen when the boy was a little shaver, and had served as a body-guard, an attendant, a servant of matchless fidelity. When his young master walked in the city this Li Hwan followed unobserved. At night he lay on a straw mat not far from his master's door. A truculent ruffian, his brawls with the police were notorious, and Sung Wu Chen had found him more or less of a nuisance.

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On this night he was subdued and downcast as he said hoarsely, in one of the Shansi dialects:

"I have beaten the chief cook and kicked two stable-boys for the lies they told me. Of course it is not true that you go to the cursed land of the Yankee foreign devils, there to live for many years."

"It is the truth, Li Hwan, and you must behave yourself hereafter, for I shall not be present to save you from jail. I go to become a great scholar."

"Too many books afflict one with sickness of the brain," grunted the other. "Very well. I will get my things together and send my wives to the home of my mother for safe-keeping. When do we sail across the huge oceans in the smoke-boat?"

"I cannot take you with me," firmly answered his lord. "It is out of the question. Even if I would, there is a law in America that forbids such as you to set foot in the land. Only scholars and officials bearing papers from the Chinese Government at Peking are admitted."

"I shall go," was the stout response. "Money shuts the eyes of the law. I have three hundred taels. If more is needed I will sell my youngest wife. She is beautiful and will fetch a good price."

"Nonsense, Li," scolded Sung with a frown. "No more of this. My illustrious father will provide for you in my absence. I shall return in three years. Be careful, meanwhile, that the sharp sword of the executioner does not separate your worthless head from your shoulders."

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Li Hwan doggedly shook his head, grumbling to himself. It was inconceivable that the son of the governor should venture into an unknown world alone without his guardian shadow. Before morning the retainer was drunk on *sam shui* and had flung a venerable watchman into the canal. Promptly thereafter he vanished from the governor's compound and was seen no more before the departure of Sung Wu Chen. The latter ordered a search, but it was futile, and in the excitement of preparation there was little time to remember the troublesome, devoted Li Hwan. It was assumed that some vengeful coolie whom he had maltreated took occasion quietly to slip a knife into him.

A journey half around the world and Sung Wu Chen became a Sophomore at Yale. Inwardly bewildered, he displayed a perfect poise and seemed older, more mature than the others of his class. Well dressed, with an abundant allowance, his manners were those of the gentleman born, and it was soon discovered that his intellect was extraordinarily keen. It was worth noting that he was recognized for what he was by those of his own kind, the leaders of the campus, who were likewise sure of their own position. The men who affected a dislike or contempt for him as a "Chink" were of a coarser grain and less nicely schooled in refinement.

Jerry Altemus, the polished, easy-going young cynic, admired Sung Wu Chen at first acquaintance, which soon grew into a congenial friendship. Here was a real philosopher, declared Jerry, who knew Confucius

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from soup to nuts and appreciated the art of conversation. Sung confided his ambition to be a Yale athlete, at which Jerry commented with a weary shrug:

"That Harvey Gray person who tutored you was an evil influence. This college runs so largely to muscle that it is both refreshing and valuable to have a brilliant scholar in our midst. Forget this delusion."

"But I intend to be a first-class Yale man," amiably persisted Sung.

"Then go and try for the varsity crew," scoffed Jerry. "They are shy a Number Four to tip the scales at a hundred and ninety."

"Is it not as great an honor to steer the boat, to be coxswain, in the race against Harvard?"

"Surely, but young Watterson has held the tiller ropes for two years," replied Jerry with scorn, "and he is rated as some coxswain."

"Perhaps I can make myself a better one. It is said in the 'Analects' that 'worthy endeavor is not to be despised, even though one's failure may cause laughter throughout the village.'"

"Go to it, oh, package of assorted maxims," grinned Jerry. "Now tell me something interesting. Finish that yarn of the rebel army that your dad chased into the mountains and slew to a man. How the deuce *you* can find anything exciting in college athletics——"

"I shall report at the gymnasium to-morrow as a candidate for coxswain," was the irritating response of Sung Wu Chen. "Yes, Jerry, I shall proceed to go to it."

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During the autumn term a dozen crews were practising on the harbor, and the varsity squad was in the formative stage. One of the coaches was kind enough to put Sung into the stern of a class shell which was training for a series of scratch races. It was soon demonstrated that here was an apt student of rowing. He picked up the theory of it as readily as he attacked mathematics, and his eye was quick to detect faults in the serried blades and the swinging bodies ranged in front of him. What counted even more in his favor was a fact which Jerry Altemus had overlooked. The young Chinese was accustomed to command, to speak with the voice of authority, to bend other men to his will. He was the son of his father, who ruled as an autocrat over millions of human souls. It was impossible that the lad should not have brought with him something of this atmosphere. He never swore or blustered as did the other coxswains, but when he gave an order he expected it to be obeyed, and it was.

The men in his boat respected his ability and were too manly to resent him because his eyes slanted and his skin was of a different hue from theirs. In the varsity shell, however, as tentatively selected from the veterans of previous years, there was a sentimentless friendly. It was stirred up by Watterson, the coxswain, a waspish little chap, who foresaw that his place might be endangered. Jealousy of Sung Wu Chen became bitter dislike, which was shared by the Number Six, a hulking, overmuscled giant named Dollibare. His temper was sulky, and the more the

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coaches hammered at him to mend his clumsy ways the less he liked rowing. He was tremendously powerful, however, and worth working over.

Watterson and Dollibare roomed together, for which reason they discussed their grievances more than was good for them. The coxswain spoke of Sung Wu Chen with contempt, and declared that things were rotten at Yale when a cocky little Chinaman was recognized as an equal and permitted to steer an eight. Dollibare, a big bully at heart, was for throwing the offender off the boat-house landing-stage, and otherwise hazing him. They did nothing but talk, however, and cold weather and a frozen river soon put an end to rowing activities until the spring season.

Sung Wu Chen turned his attention to other forms of campus rivalry, and won a place on the university debating team, besides climbing to the head of his class in the rating for scholarship honors. This was a source of tremendous pride and satisfaction to the lonely, austere governor of a remote Chinese province. He doubled the salary of Harvey Gray, his foreign adviser, as a reward for his share in his son's success, and, in phrases stately and ornate, conveyed the news to the Chinese minister in Washington, who was a kinsman of his. The minister invited Sung Wu Chen to spend a week-end with him, and gave a dinner in his honor. At Sung's suggestion, Jerry Altemus and Bob Sedgwick, the varsity guard, were among the guests, and they met diplomatic notables of such high distinction that it made them quite dizzy.

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"And the little rooster puts on no airs whatever," said Jerry to Bob as they discussed the affair. "He has a sound philosophy of life. Nothing like it. Stick around him and you may acquire the rudiments of a genuine education."

"You said something then," was the careless reply. "And, what cuts more ice, I will bet you a box of cigars that he crowds Watterson out of the varsity shell and steers in the next Harvard race."

"I am ashamed of you again," severely returned Mr. Altemus. "Do you ever think of anything but athletics? Your development ceases at the neck. And you are base enough to bet on a sure thing."

Sedgwick was a shrewd prophet. During the winter the Head Coach of the crew met Sung in a social way, and discovered that he took rowing seriously as a science, studying to master it as a problem in applied mechanics. This was a novelty, for coxswains were apt to be flighty young rascals. When the oarsmen were once more upon the water, in the blustering days of March, Sung was promoted to the third varsity shell. The spray froze on his cheek, but his black eyes danced with happiness, and he envied not the pomp and power of his illustrious sire.

One afternoon, when the crews had been kept cut late and twilight was falling, as he trotted up to the campus, muffled in sweaters, Sung descried a group of undergraduates in front of his dormitory entrance. There seemed to be some centre of attraction, and presently he perceived a singular figure seated upon

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the stone steps. It was clad in Chinese garments, the long blue coat, the baggy crimson breeches, the white cloth shoes, and the round black cap. These looked bizarre on the Yale campus, and Sung surmised that the man might be a messenger from the Chinese legation. As he drew near, however, and made his way through the curious group, his amazement was beyond words. In the failing light identification was difficult, but he thought he knew this man, and yet he refused to credit his eyesight. The singular apparition had sat crouching, with his hands tucked in his flowing sleeves, stolidly patient, but now he leaped to his feet and emitted a torrent of guttural sounds as harsh as the grinding of a coffee-mill.

Sung Wu Chen doubted no longer. The rude accents of the Shansi dialect smote his ears with welcome familiarity. His own voice broke with excitement as he hurled one question after another. The bystanders cheered, having no idea of what it was all about, but delighted with the original performance. The chattering stranger was prostrating himself at the feet of Sung Wu Chen, almost fawning upon him like a dog that had found a long-lost master. He was a burly man of middle age, and during his two-hour vigil upon the stone steps the idling spectators had been wary of chaffing him, for his aspect was truculent and challenging.

Presently Sung Wu Chen uttered a peremptory command and the other meekly followed him into the hall and up the staircase. Once in his rooms, Sung locked

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the door against curious intrusion, and his retainer, Li Hwan, stood like one awaiting punishment. His master motioned him to a chair, but he tucked up his garments and seated himself upon the floor. The episode was absolutely incredible. It could have been no more so if this battered ruffian had come sailing down from the moon.

Evidently the heaven-born offspring of the glorified ruler of Shansi intended not to summon an American executioner at once, for his deified countenance was not black with wrath, wherefore the weary pilgrim from Cathay picked up heart, permitted a grin to bisect his unlovely features, and plucked a box of cigarettes from his sleeve. Sung Wu Chen renewed his wondering interrogations, and he was answered in a rambling sing-song, delivered in a matter-of-fact manner, as though nothing extraordinary had been done.

"It was necessary," said Li Hwan. "Who was there to serve and protect you in this devil-begotten land of barbarians? I walked from Shansi to the sea. A thousand miles? A million? I know not. It was a long way, a journey of months. At Tientsin there was a smoke-boat. It carried me to Shanghai. There I found another smoke-boat, huge, monstrous, and filled with the population of many villages. After that the world was nothing but water, most uneasy water, and dreadful sickness took hold of me by the stomach and tormented my liver, and I died more deaths than could be counted. After that was a fire-wagon on a road of steel, crossing swiftly over mountains and

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great plains like those of Shansi, and cities whose buildings touched the sky."

"But all this explains nothing," broke in Sung Wu Chen. "The rattle of pebbles in an earthen pot! You couldn't speak English. You could never find New Haven alone. And, in the first place, the laws of this government forbade you to come. How did you trick the inspectors, the police, the magistrates? It is unheard of."

"I am here," was the irrefutable argument. "Perhaps at some time, when I was a bad man, there were favors done a certain high official in Peking. He may have had an enemy whose presence vexed him. Who can tell? In gratitude certain writings, sealed and properly prepared, may have been granted me."

"Proclaiming you as a scholar entitled to travel and study in this country?" demanded Sung. "You are a gifted liar. You paid gold to other Chinese to smuggle you in, as you once smuggled salt across our own province. If you have not the documents to show, this government will find you and send you back, with heavy penalty."

The unterrified Li Hwan tapped his blouse but refused to show what was hidden therein. There was, indeed, a crackle of paper, and Sung felt inclined to believe that the wily rogue had some sort of credentials. He refused to incriminate himself further, explaining, however, that the unsuspecting Harvey Gray had written down for him the address of New Haven and Yale College. This Li Hwan had employed a com-

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prador's clerk at Tientsin to copy upon a piece of stout parchment which he had sewn to the lining of his blouse.

"And this was read by the men of the fire-wagons," commented Sung, "and they forwarded you from one place to another as bales are carried across the desert on camels. Have you any money left?"

"Only the value of a few strings of cash, even though I sold my youngest wife for a very fine price. I want nothing but a mat to sleep on, and rice and dried fish to eat."

His master gazed at him in comical perplexity. There was to be no getting rid of him. As a pretended scholar sojourning in the United States, he vastly appealed to Sung's sense of humor. This masquerade was out of the question at Yale. He would explain the situation to the dean and ask permission to retain Li Hwan as a personal servant who should take care of his rooms, finding him lodgings among the Chinese laundrymen of New Haven.

The dean made an exception to the rules concerning valets and the like, but this by no means solved the problem. Li Hwan scornfully refused to consort with the pallid coolies from Canton, who spoke not his dialect, and were despicable in the sight of a strong man from the north. He wriggled through a basement window of the dormitory and slept there a week until evicted by the janitor. At his wit's end, Sung leased a tiny bit of ground near the boat-house, and erected a portable cottage of two rooms, in which Li

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Hwan consented to live alone. He fished from the bridge when at leisure, and watched the crews with absorbed interest. Never did Sung walk between the campus and the boat-house but Li Hwan flitted a block or two behind in his felt-soled shoes, vigilant, devoted, and ready to lay down his life.

When the eights began to round into form and there were almost daily races of a mile or so for practice, this exotic follower could be seen scampering along the shore, his skirts flying, or perched at the end of a wharf. And when the crew of which Sung Wu Chen was coxswain swung into the lead, or nipped another eight in a driving spurt at the finish, there came over the water a shrill and prolonged "Hi-yi-yi-yi-yi."

In May Sung was given a trial in the varsity boat, and the wrathful Watterson glowered from the landing-stage. The Chinese rival had been getting on his nerves. His temper was erratic and his steering faulty. He damned the men incessantly, and they were tired of him, excepting Dollibare at Number Six. He was pulling in better form and seemed sure of the position, but the coaches doubted his courage in a tight pinch.

At the training-table, where there should have existed a comradeship close-knit and genial, these two were a jarring element. Dollibare swore he would never sit at the same table with Sung Wu Chen.

The sulky Number Six submitted, however, when the Coach concluded to drop Watterson from the squad and to replace him with the abler Chinese. The latter

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was icily courteous, and Dollibare was conscious of an inward reluctance to force the issue. His enmity found no allies among the crew, and he contented himself with nasty little flings, studied insults clumsily masked. In the eyes of Sung he was a boor of peasant stock who knew no better. American democracy was a fine ideal, but he discerned the caste marks of birth and breeding as unmistakably as among his own people.

This oarsmanship was more or less inscrutable to that devoted slave Li Hwan. He accepted it because his master chose to amuse himself in this peculiar fashion, but he could not comprehend why these young men did not hire coolies to perform the labor in their stead. He was loitering at the boat-house, scowling over this mystery, when Jerry Altemus and a chum came down to watch the crew go out. They attempted amiable conversation with him, and taught him the Yale cheer, and, to return the kindness, he fished a set of Chinese jack-stones from his raiment and found them apt pupils. Jerry could never overlook a chance to bet, and Li Hwan was a born gambler. The pastime became animated, therefore, with a clink of nickels and dimes.

Dollibare sprawled in the sun, stripped to the waist, the muscles knotted on his sunburnt back and shoulders. Sung Wu Chen came down the runway to the landing-stage, moving at a trot, for the Coach had called him to take two substitutes out in the pair-oared working-boat. With a laugh Dollibare flung out a hairy leg and neatly tripped the coxswain, who fell

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headlong and slid across the planking, his hands filled with splinters.

He was on his feet like a cat, saying not a word but wheeling to rush at the sneering Number Six, who overtopped him by a foot. Dollibare lazily reached out, not troubling himself to rise, caught Sung by one arm, pulled him down, and slapped his face. Before the others could intervene Li Hwan had dropped the jack-stones, hurdled clean over Jerry Altemus, and his crimson breeches seemed to be striding the air as he alighted squarely on top of young Mr. Dollibare. The latter turned white, uttered one quavering yell, and then his windpipe was constricted by two corded brown hands whose grip was death.

They were pried apart before his neck was broken. Sung bade his defender begone and violently cuffed his ears. Li Hwan grinned and vanished without a sound. Dollibare was unable to row for three days, and the marks on his neck were as blue as India ink. His demeanor was chastened and he started suddenly at unaccustomed noises. He ignored Sung, who was at pains to wish him a pleasant good morning. It was the verdict of the campus, as voiced by Jerry Altemus, that Li Hwan should have been allowed to finish the job. Dollibare was not a popular man.

The crew went to New London early in June, and Sung sported the white flannels of a varsity oar with the embroidered blue letters on the pocket of the coat. The imperial decorations bestowed upon his father could not compare with this insignia. Li Hwan was

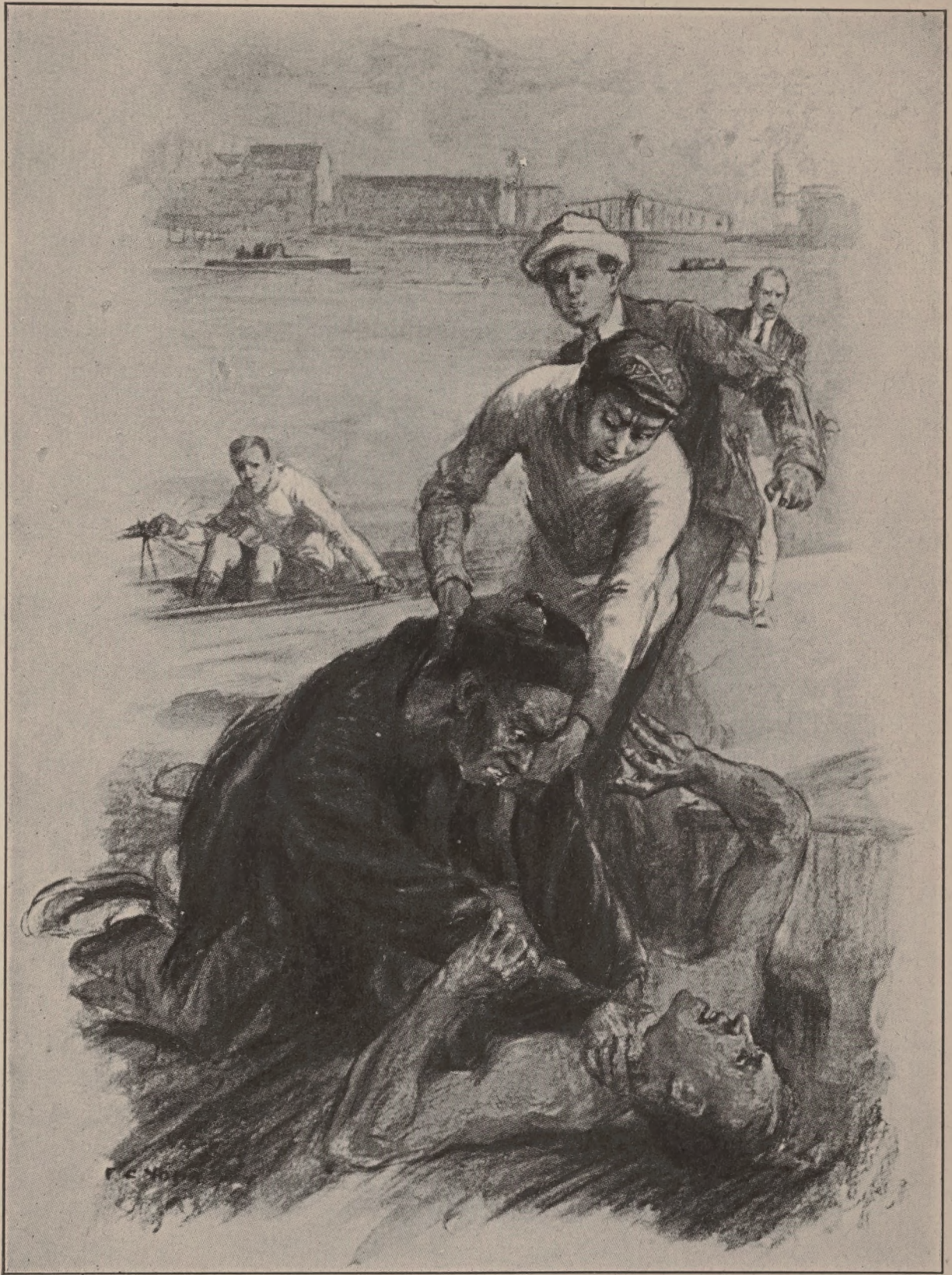
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in a tent behind the Freshman quarters, and he bought him a flat-bottomed skiff and a pair of field-glasses, armed with which he followed after the crew and scanned the daily work with oracular gravity and abysmal ignorance.

Two days before the race with Harvard the Coach took Sung over the four-mile course in a launch for final instruction in the marks, the current, the tide, and the channel. There was more eel-grass on the western side than usual, and it was important, if Yale should chance to draw this course, that the first two miles should be steered with cunning care, for the race was to be rowed down-stream.

"A cross wind will tend to set you over," cautioned the Coach, "and if you once go wide of the flag and into the shoal water the drag of the grass will hold the boat back as sure as guns. At a mile and a half you swing out into the channel and then it is clear sailing. But, for heaven's sake, watch your boat and your marks over this stretch! It may mean winning or losing the race."

The coxswain nodded. He was the calmer of the two. He had been stealing out at daylight, in Li Hwan's skiff, to drift along the edge of the eel-grass at every stage of tide. Harvard and Yale appeared to be so evenly matched that neither could afford to sacrifice a single foot of distance in the contest. Even Sung felt the strain and suspense, and on the last night at the Gales Ferry quarters he went to find Li Hwan. He wished to get away from the restless, absent-minded



They were pried apart before his neck was broken.

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oarsmen, the forced gayety, the heavy silences. There was homely comfort in chatting with Li Hwan of their own adventures amid the red hills of Shansi, of hunting the leopard, and of cruises in high-pooped junks on turbid yellow rivers where the rocks snatched the bottom out before you could wink.

"What is your opinion of the Yale crew?" suddenly demanded Sung with a twinkle. "How many taels have you bet that we win the great combat with oars?"

"Fools and lunatics are these deluded young men, excepting your enlightened self," emphatically answered Li Hwan. "It is proper that you sit in the narrow boat and give them the commands. They are your servants. A bet? Yes, I have wagered my last tael with the cook of Harvard, who is a black man from Africa. It was in my mind to offer him money to put poison in the food of those boat-row madmen, but fear of your disfavor restrained me."

"I would have tossed you in the river to drown," Sung told him. "You believe Yale is strong and ready?"

"There is one man of these eight servants of yours who is not to my liking," the other gravely imparted. "I have known this pattern of man in our own Shansi. There was one in my youth, a village bully of huge size and strength and threatening words. The headmen and elders feared him. He had many followers of his own clan. They robbed strangers and looted shopkeepers of their wares. Alone I caught this ter-

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rible fellow and beat him until he wept for mercy like a woman. His heart was soft and rotten within his breast, like a melon too long in the sun."

"You speak of the one called Dollibare?" said Sung. "I feel contempt for him, but in the race he will pull with tremendous effort."

Li Hwan grunted dubiously and changed the subject. It was presumptuous of him to air his judgment in matters of which he knew nothing. Presently the Captain of the crew shouted a summons and the coxswain went to join his comrades for a walk before bedtime. The place was early astir next morning, and all eyes sought the river whose surface lay unruffled beneath a cloudless sky. There was every promise of perfect conditions for the race. The oarsmen, who had dreaded postponement more than anything else, became cheerful, their nerves taut and ready now that the crisis was at hand. At length the whistle of the referee's launch sounded the fateful call, and the Yale shell moved at a leisurely pace toward the starting-point.

A small breeze began to ripple the water, at first in catpaws, then with a steady draught, and it blew athwart the course. Sung Wu Chen was anxious as he felt it increase, but he appeared unperturbed as he deftly manœuvred the shell into position on the eel-grass side of the course. The Harvard crew came tardily, and there was a trying delay at the stake-boats. Along the wooded shore hard by trailed the observation-train, a riot of tumult and color, and the

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lower stretch of river was a wonderful panorama of pleasure craft.

The racking suspense of these final moments, the presence of this great multitude of spectators, seemed to affect the Number Six of the Yale boat in a singular manner. Beneath the tan his complexion had a grayish cast, and his lips were bloodless. The coxswain had to speak to him several times before he paid heed. He resembled a victim of stage-fright. Only Sung Wu Chen, who sat facing him, was aware that Dolli-bare was in a state of funk. He appeared to master it, however, when the referee told the crews to get ready. An instant later the two shells shot away to a faultless start, and the eight men of Yale were rowing as one, with no apparent flaw at Number Six.

At the half-mile flag Harvard had dropped a length behind and was unmistakably the slower, less powerful crew. To those who could speak as experts it looked like a procession led by Yale. Sung Wu Chen, swaying in the stern, tensely clutching the tiller-ropes, yelled for a spurt, and his rudder drew farther ahead of Harvard's prow. A little beyond, however, and from the tail of his eye the coxswain perceived that his own crew was very slowly dropping back. Unable to credit it for a moment, he shouted again, and the Yale stroke-oar swung up quicker and harder, while the others followed the cadenced beat that he set for them.

This effort was futile, for the rival eight crept nearer and was closing the gap. Sung Wu Chen gazed ahead

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at the next flag which marked his course and discerned that he was a trifle too far to the westward. Mindful of the cross wind, he had been making allowance for a possible drift, but the shell seemed to be sagging off toward the shore in spite of his efforts to hold it straight. He ceased to think of Harvard, and was concerned only with keeping his boat safely clear of the shoaler water and the dangerous eel-grass. Once he glanced over his shoulder and the figures in the bow of the coaching launch that churned in the wake of the race were wildly waving their arms at him.

The slender nose of the shell persisted in veering away from the flag, and the straining rudder could not hold it straight. The wind was not heavy enough to account for this. The coxswain scanned his men for signs of weakening. The wet blades rose and flashed and fell in unison, and the bare, brown shoulders moved like a machine to the long heave of the catch. A second glance at Number Six and Sung realized that Dollibare was little better than a passenger. He went through the motions of the stroke with automatic precision, as his big body had been drilled to perform them, but he was like one in a trance, with mind benumbed and nervous energy deadened. This the sagacious coxswain read in his face. Thus had cowardly fear written itself upon the countenances of men led forth to die, as the son of the governor had beheld them in far-distant Shansi. Of a truth, the heart of this Dollibare had turned to water. Frantically the coxswain exhorted him, raked and blistered him with insults, hoping to

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goad him into action, to shame him into a very fury of endeavor, but the craven Number Six could not respond.

Three men on the starboard side of the shell were really rowing against four on the port. Add to this disparity the pressure of the breeze and it was impossible for the rudder to keep the course true. Yale was edging away from the channel, steadily drawing closer to the margin of the eel-grass, and Harvard as steadily pulled up abreast and began to lead. Soon Sung Wu Chen could feel the drag beneath the keel, as though invisible hands had grasped the boat to hold it back. The blades of the oars splashed and failed to get the solid grip of deeper water. The crew appeared to flounder. There was angry, gasping outcry from stroke to bow, begging the coxswain for God's sake to get out of the grass and give them a chance.

There was a full half-mile of this nightmare, and then the hapless shell shot clear and veered into the wide reach where the full tide swept toward the sea and scoured the channel clean. For Yale it was no longer a boat-race but a tragedy. Six lengths behind at the navy-yard, it seemed useless to endure the weary grind of two miles more. Ten thousand disgusted partisans, afloat and ashore, blamed it all to the Chinese coxswain, who had thrown the race away. He himself knew better and also knew that he was to be the scapegoat.

Seven men, bitterly desperate and profoundly courageous, in the splendid folly of youth believing that

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theirs is an affair of life and death, are never beaten this side of the finish line. They set out to make a stern chase of it, not two miles of hard rowing, but one continuous spurt, every stroke pulled as though it were the last one. It was a feat such as makes college sport nobly worth while.

Their ardor was so like a flame that it even scorched the soul of Dollibare and he came out of his panic-born stupor. He was no longer the mere semblance of an oarsman. The blade buckled to the lift of his mighty back and his hairy legs drove the finish home like twin pistons. The coxswain steered as straight as an arrow, and the balanced stride of the shell resembled the harmony of music. They could not win, the odds against them were too great, but in two heart-breaking miles they regained five of the lost boat-lengths, and their quivering shell was lapping the Harvard stern as they drove past the final flag. It was a defeat and yet an intrinsic victory.

This the multitude could not comprehend. They honored the men who had so nearly won, but, nevertheless, it was Harvard's race, and the crimson banners flaunted while the blue flags drooped. A blundering coxswain had brought disaster to an eight which could not have been beaten otherwise. This was the verdict of the crowd. There was a rush to the shore when the exhausted Yale oarsmen clambered from their shell into the launch, and louder than the cheers for their pluck was the angry denunciation of Sung Wu Chen. The fact that he was of an alien race intensified the feeling.

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While the launch steamed up-river to the quarters he sat apart from his comrades, immobile as an image of old ivory. They had no word of blame. He had done his best, they said, and the wind had tricked him. The coxswain was aware, however, that in their opinion he alone was responsible. Every man of seven of them had been too intent upon his own tremendous task to read the soul of Dollibare and find him culpable. It was forbidden to Sung Wu Chen to reveal the truth and shift the guilt. Even should he stoop so low as to be a talebearer, Dollibare would deny the charge and there was no manner of proof. The coxswain made haste to leave the quarters nor tarried to say farewell. Li Hwan waited with the skiff and rowed him across the river to find a train.

They went straightway to New Haven, avoiding friends, shunning the crowd. Li Hwan asked no questions and made no comments. He had beheld the race and its aftermath, and clearly comprehended the significance of this misfortune. In the sight of a vast number of barbarians his ineffably illustrious lord *had lost face*. It was the supreme catastrophe that could have befallen. His base-born slave dared offer no sympathy. It was his duty to await commands. The demeanor of Li Hwan was no more swaggering. He appeared crushed and dazed. Sung Wu Chen busied himself in his rooms, dragging a trunk from the closet, while his servant dumbly waited in the hall.

The door opened and Sung beckoned. Li Hwan stood with bowed head, his hands in his sleeves, his beady eyes furtively watching every change of expres-

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sion on his master's face. It was needless to discuss or even mention the significance of what had occurred. At a word Li Hwan began to pack clothing while Sung emptied the desk and threw most of the contents into the fireplace. The books and furnishings he left untouched, removing only such property as was peculiarly personal. What he was about to do should be performed elsewhere than in this college dormitory where dwelt his best friends. In this hour modernity was a veneer and he belonged with the China of his fathers. It was not meet that he should risk vexing the *fung-shui*, the spirits of wind and water, and so disturb the fortunes of this building.

Late in the evening he was ready to quit his campus lodgings. Li Hwan went with him to the pretentious hotel beyond Chapel Street, where he asked the clerk for a suite, as befitting his rank, for he was no longer a Yale Sophomore, but the only son of the governor of Shansi. Before writing certain necessary letters he vouchsafed an explanation to the servant, whose stalwart body was trembling.

"His Excellency, the Chinese minister, will come from Washington to arrange all matters in the proper manner. You will wait for him, Li, and he will send you to our home in safety and comfort. To my father, the *Tsungtuh* and dispenser of shining wisdom in the city of Taiyuen Fu, you will bear my message which I shall write to-night and wrap in silk."

Timidly Li Hwan ventured to inquire, his posture reverential: "There is no other way? I am a man

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without brains and unable to understand this boat-rowing, but is it not the truth that this misfortune was no fault of thine?"

"It was no fault of mine," agreed Sung Wu Chen, willing to confide this much in one who was of his own people. "There was a wind, but not enough to account for—for what happened to-day on the river in the presence of a vast assemblage."

A long silence, and then Li Hwan shifted uneasily but kept his thoughts to himself. Notwithstanding Sung's gesture of dismissal, he lingered as though awaiting some word of farewell. At length he burst out with startling vehemence:

"The thing must have been done by one man. His ancestors were village dogs and he is unfit for the company of scavengers. Did I not revile him when we spoke together in the evening of yesterday?"

"Number Six?" murmured the coxswain with a shrug. "The mighty Dollibare? It is foolish to revile. They who respect themselves will be honored, says the Chinese proverb which you learned at school. You will find me here in the morning, Li Hwan. I have matters to attend to. Go at once."

The retainer prostrated himself, his forehead touching the floor in the kowtow due one of exalted station. It was rather a tribute than a ceremonial. Then he stole from the room and softly closed the door. Sung Wu Chen sighed and began to compose the letter to his father, using a brush to draw the characters with beautiful art, the phrases polished with deliberate care.

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He quoted the praiseworthy example of Admiral Ting, who had taken his own life sooner than endure the disgrace of defeat in the harbor of Wei-hai-wei. In the sight of the great university of Yale and of its scholars and friends throughout the land, he, Sung Wu Chen, had committed an unpardonable offense and dragged its banner in the dust of humiliation. It was no other sage than Mencius who had written: "Although I love life, there is that which I love more than life."

When this filial task was finished the son of the governor poured out his heart in English to Harvey Gray, his old comrade and tutor, telling him the facts in detail, and begging his forgiveness, with the injunction to try to make the father comprehend how and why the race was lost. Having despatched the remaining business, the coxswain meditated, his gaze drawn to the small automatic pistol on the table before him. In such a situation as this many eminent Chinese had swallowed gold as the traditional manner of honorable suicide, among them the Emperor Ts'ung-cheng. It was regrettable, reflected Sung, that he knew not how to prepare this draught.

The hour was past midnight. There was nothing more to be done. His affairs were in order. A knocking at the door, and he turned angrily in his chair but made no response. A tattoo of impatient knuckles and he still kept silent. A fist banged the panels. A moment later the door flew from its hinges with a splintering crash and Li Hwan tumbled into the room. Bounding to his feet, he wheeled and dragged in after

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him a tall, heavily built young man in the white flannels of the varsity crew. His face, pallid beneath the tan, was bruised and scratched, his coat torn. He breathed with difficulty, as though exhausted, and his manner was stupefied like one deprived of volition.

From his chair Sung Wu Chen gazed at the hapless Dollibare, and perceived that he was in the grip of that same panic fright which had paralyzed his will in the first two miles of the race. He was trying to speak in a faltering voice, but Li Hwan declaimed in accents ferocious:

"Let him be dumb until I have said my say. He came willingly after I had caught and mastered him. Through this huge hotel he marched at my heels, knowing that death was in my two hands."

It was the unregenerate Li Hwan that thundered this, the man of brawls and forays, who may have once worn the red sash of a Boxer and screamed destruction to all foreigners in the streets of Taiyuen Fu. Sung spoke sharply and he subsided, permitting Dollibare to stammer:

"This d-damned murderer was laying for me. He must have followed me across the campus. I was turning on the lights in my room when he jumped on my back. What's it all about?"

"One guess should be enough," replied Sung Wu Chen, his intonations precise. "My servant is not as great a fool as he looks. He tamed you, eh, Dollibare? You did not call out for the police? You came as if you were tied on a string?"

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"He would have stuck a knife into me if I hadn't. I had no choice."

Li Hwan glared so frightfully that the poltroon dodged and raised his arm. It had been the amiable purpose of the captor to extort a confession by means of a knotted cord about the temples, or something of the sort, but Sung Wu Chen was wiser, and he saw that nothing more was needed to achieve the end desired. Physical cowardice had utterly broken Dollibare, who believed that the barbarous Li Hwan would not hesitate to slay him where he stood.

"You will not deny that you failed to pull your share in the race?" smoothly queried Sung. "You know this was why I could not steer the boat away from the eel-grass?"

The culprit tried miserably to exculpate himself, explaining in a rush of words:

"I didn't realize it at the time, old man, but I'm afraid I didn't get much power on my oar. It was an extraordinary feeling. I meant to talk it over with you, but you slipped away from the quarters in a hurry, and—well, it may have had something to do with your getting in trouble on the first half of the course. But what about this infernal heathen of yours—the way he treated me?—you are responsible for him."

"I swear to you, Dollibare, that I never expected to see him again," was the earnest affirmation. "Yes, he would not hesitate to kill you, because, in his heathen code, you forfeited your right to live. Let

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us not leave this matter half-way. You did not pull even a pound because your soul had turned yellow and sick with fear. Acknowledge it as truth or, by God, I shall not stop the hand of Li Hwan."

Dolibare nodded assent against his will. He felt amazed at his own helplessness. The actors were so absorbed that they failed to observe the approach of two young men who halted at the doorway and stared at the tableau. It held them curiously intent for a moment. Then the shrewd, self-possessed Jerry Altemus observed with a smile:

"Pardon us, Sung, if we seem to intrude. Sedgwick and I have been raking the campus to find you. We blew in on a late train from New London, and it occurred to us that you needed cheering up a whole lot."

"Sure thing. Never say die, old top," chimed in the other visitor. "Just by luck we drifted into this joint, and the clerk said you had chartered rooms. What's the answer? It's never too late to eat. Come along, and we'll make you forget it over a few mugs of ale."

Bob Sedgwick looked questioningly at Dolibare, who seemed oblivious of their presence. Young Mr. Altemus studied the bruised cheek and let his glance rove to the bellicose figure of Li Hwan. The latter sidled past the table and slid the pistol into his sleeve with the skill of a juggler.

"Can I help you in any way?" drawled Jerry. "I'm afraid we broke into something."

"Dolibare can tell you what it is," said Sung Wu

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Chen. "He has just confessed that he lost the race for us."

"The deuce he has!" cried Bob Sedgwick. "Then that lets you out. Wow, but that sounds good to me."

"It does not let me out," gently protested the coxswain. "How can it save my face? The newspapers will publish it all over America that I am guilty."

Jerry Altemus doffed his languid demeanor and was all fire and action in an instant. He, too, was the son of a great man, who ruled a railroad system instead of a province, and he also was a chip of the old block.

"Write it out, quick, and make Dollibare sign his name to it," he volleyed at Sung. "Brief and to the point. I'll be getting the New York office of the Associated Press on the 'phone. They will know who I am. My dad owns a newspaper or two on the side and controls an A. P. franchise. This will save time. Hustle down to the local office, Bob, and tell 'em you can verify it if they shoot a query back from New York. We'll get it into the city editions all over the country. It's sensational stuff."

"And can it be sent by cable to China?" wistfully demanded the coxswain, who was rather stunned by this happy climax.

"You bet. I'll see to that," returned the impetuous Jerry as he flew across the room to the telephone. Bob Sedgwick, about to dash for an elevator, paused to say:

"You took this pretty seriously, Sung. By Jove, I believe you had made up your mind to leave college!"

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"Yes. I had said good-by to Yale," was the calm reply. "Now I have decided to stay. Thank you, my best of friends."

The luckless Dollibare, compelled like a puppet to do the bidding of others, was heard to remark:

"This means that *I* leave college. Publish this in the papers and I am queered absolutely."

"There are other colleges, where they have no eight-oared crews," blandly suggested Jerry Altemus.

Li Hwan begged for enlightenment, receiving which his rugged features were illumined with wonderful, affectionate gladness, and he grunted as he moved toward the door:

"A business for madmen is this boat-rowing, but no matter. It is well that I came from Shansi to protect my heaven-born master, for his honor is saved and he has not lost face. *Lah, lah, lah—lah, lah, lah. YALE.*"



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